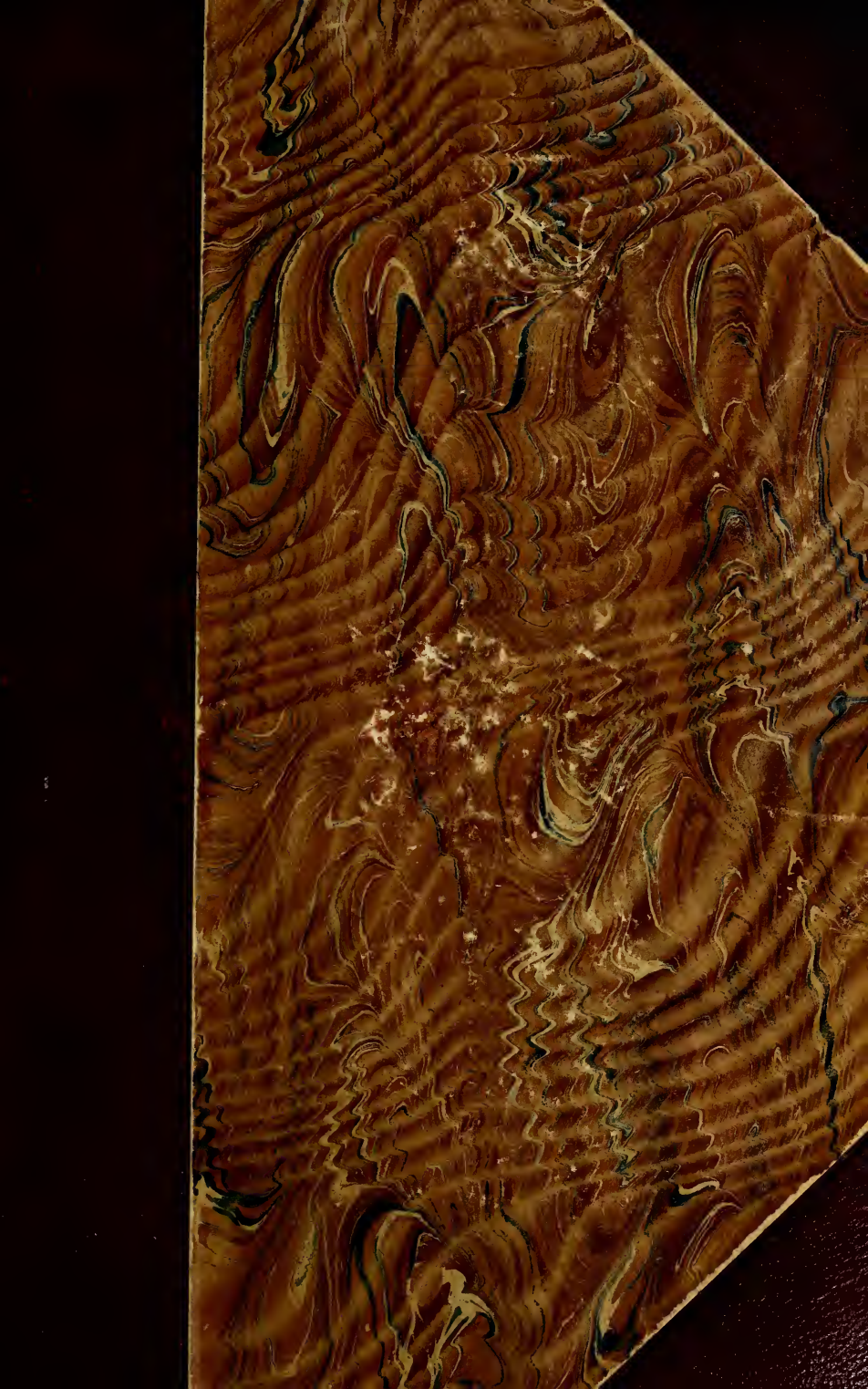

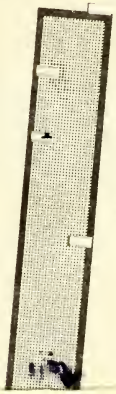

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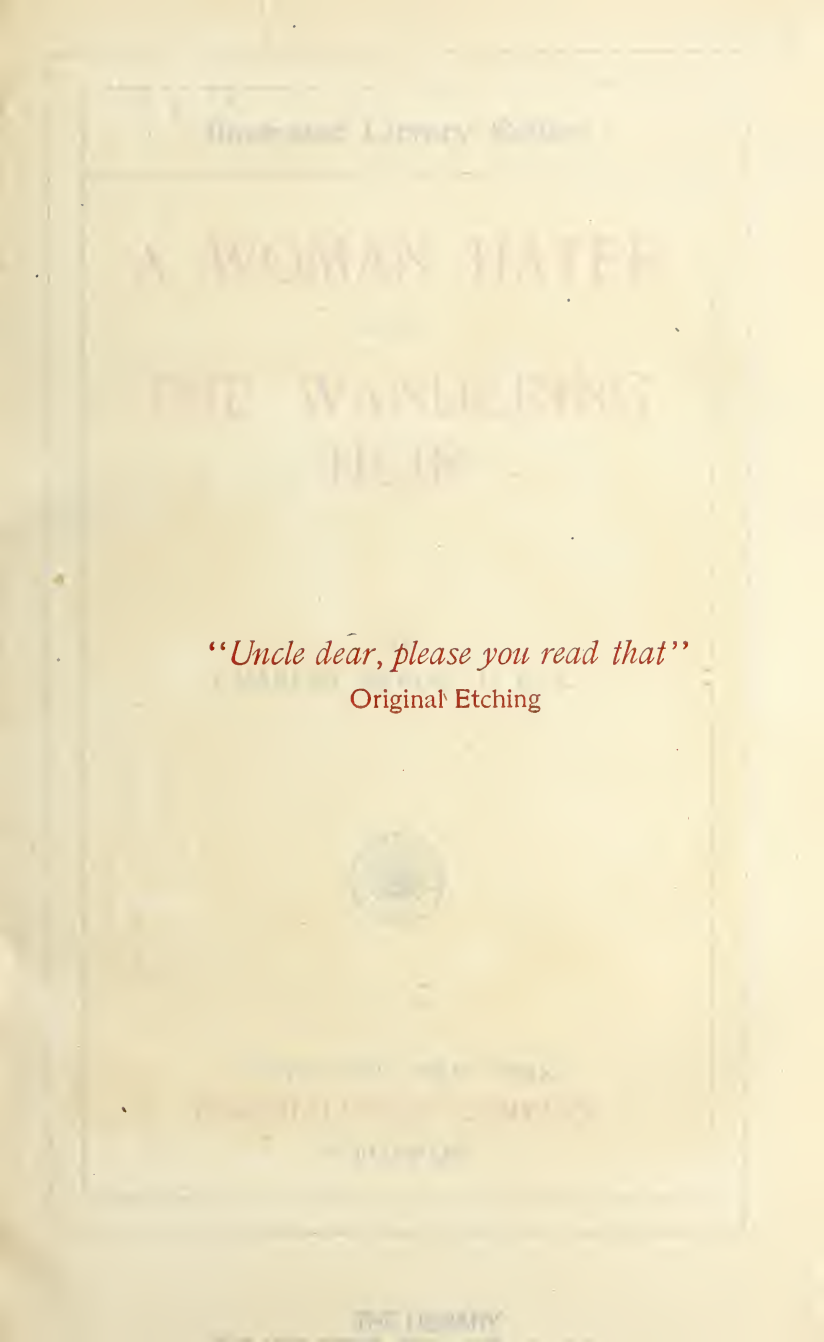

"Uncle dear, please you read that"
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A WOMAN HATER

THE WANDERING HEIR

BY

CHARLES READE, D. C. L.

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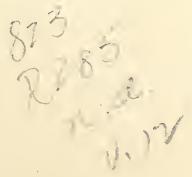


LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A WOMAN HATER

PAGE

They strolled very slowly by the fair river . . 87

He held the photograph at arm's length . . . 159

As he mounted the stairs 390

THE WANDERING HEIR

"Uncle, dear, please you read that" . . *Frontispiece*

"Oh, pray don't kill me!" 59

"Madam," said the Admiral, "you mistake the matter" 116

A WOMAN-HATER.

CHAPTER I.

THE "Golden Star," Homburg, was a humble hotel, not used by gay gamblers, but by modest travellers.

An two o'clock, one fine day in June, there were two strangers in the *salle à manger*, seated at small tables a long way apart, and wholly absorbed in their own business.

One was a lady about twenty-four years old, who, in the present repose of her features, looked comely, sedate, and womanly, but not the remarkable person she really was. Her forehead high and white, but a little broader than sculptors affect. Her long hair, coiled tight, in a great many smooth snakes, upon her snowy nape, was almost flaxen, yet her eyebrows and long lashes not pale but a reddish brown. Her gray eyes, large and profound; her mouth rather large, beautifully shaped, amiable, and expressive, but full of resolution; her chin a little broad; her neck and hands admirably white and polished. She was an Anglo-Dane, — her father English.

If you ask me what she was doing, why — hunting; and had been for some days, in all the inns of Homburg. She had the visitors' book, and was going through the names of the whole year, and studying each to see

whether it looked real, or assumed. Interspersed were flippant comments, and verses, adapted to draw a smile of amusement or contempt; but this hunter passed them all over as nullities: the steady pose of her head, the glint of her deep eye, and the set of her fine lips, showed a mind not to be diverted from its object.

The traveller at her back had a map of the district, and blank telegrams, one of which he filled in every now and then, and scribbled a hasty letter to the same address. He was a sharp-faced middle-aged man of business; Joseph Ashmead, operatic and theatrical agent — at his wits' end: a female singer at the Homburg Opera had fallen really ill; he was commissioned to replace her, and had only thirty hours to do it in. So he was hunting a singer. What the lady was hunting can never be known, unless she should choose to reveal it.

Karl, the waiter, felt bound to rouse these abstracted guests, and stimulate their appetites. He affected, therefore, to look on them as people who had not yet breakfasted, and tripped up to Mr. Ashmead with a bill of fare, rather scanty.

The busiest Englishman can eat, and Ashmead had no objection to snatch a mouthful; he gave his order in German with an English accent. But the lady, when appealed to, said softly, in pure German, "I will wait for the *table-d'hôte*."

"The *table-d'hôte!* It wants four hours to that."

The lady looked Karl full in the face, and said, slowly, and very distinctly, "Then, I — will — wait — four — hours."

These simple words, uttered firmly, and in a contralto voice of singular volume and sweetness, sent Karl skipping; but their effect on Mr. Ashmead was more remarkable; he started up from his chair with an exclamation, and bent his eyes eagerly on the melodious speaker.

He could only see her back hair and her figure; but, apparently, this quick-eared gentleman had also quick eyes, for he said aloud in English, "Her hair, too — it must be;" and he came hurriedly towards her. She caught a word or two, and turned, and saw him. "Ah!" said she, and rose, but the points of her fingers still rested on the book.

"It is!" cried Ashmead. "It is!"

"Yes, Mr. Ashmead," said the lady, coloring a little, but in pure English, and with a composure not easily disturbed; "it is Ina Klosking."

"What a pleasure!" cried Ashmead; "and what a surprise! Ah, madam, I never hoped to see you again. When I heard you had left the Munich Opera so sudden, I said, 'There goes one more bright star, quenched forever.' And you to desert us; you, the risingest singer in Germany!"

"Mr. Ashmead!"

"You can't deny it. You know you were."

The lady, thus made her own judge, seemed to reflect a moment, and said, "I was a well-grounded musician, thanks to my parents. I was a very hard-working singer; and I had the advantage of being supported in my early career, by a gentleman of judgment and spirit, who was a manager at first, and brought me forward, afterwards a popular agent, and talked managers into a good opinion of me."

"Ah, madam," said Ashmead, tenderly, "it is a great pleasure to hear this from you, and spoken with that mellow voice, which would charm a rattlesnake; but what would my zeal and devotion have availed, if you had not been a born singer?"

"Why — yes," said Ina, thoughtfully; "I was a singer." But she seemed to say this, not as a thing to be proud of, but only because it happened to be true;

and, indeed, it was a peculiarity of this woman, that she appeared nearly always to think — if but for half a moment — before she spoke, and to say things, whether about herself or others, only because they were the truth. The reader, who shall condescend to bear this in mind, will possess some little clew to the color and effect of her words as spoken. Often, where they seem simple and commonplace, on paper, they were weighty by their extraordinary air of truthfulness, as well as by the deep music of her mellow, bell-like voice.

"Oh, you do admit that," said Mr. Ashmead, with a chuckle: "then why jump off the ladder, so near the top? Oh, of course I know — the old story; but you might give twenty-two hours to love, and still spare a couple to music."

"That seems a reasonable division," said Ina, naïvely. "But (apologetically) he was jealous."

"Jealous! — more shame for him. I'm sure no lady in public life was ever more discreet."

"No, no; he was only jealous of the public."

"And what had the poor public done?"

"Absorbed me, he said."

"Why, he could take you to the opera, and take you home from the opera, and, during the opera, he could make one of the public, and applaud you as loud as the best."

"Yes, but rehearsals! — and — embracing the tenor."

"Well, but only on the stage."

"Oh, Mr. Ashmead, where else does one embrace the tenor?"

"And was that a grievance? Why, I'd embrace fifty tenors — if I was paid proportionable."

"Yes, but he said I embraced one poor stick with a fervor — an *abandon* — Well, I dare say I did; for if they had put a gate-post in the middle of the stage, and

it was in my part to embrace the thing, I should have done it honestly, for love of my art, and not of a post. The next time I had to embrace the poor stick, it was all I could do not to pinch him savagely."

"And turn him to a counter-tenor — make him squeak."

Ina Klosking smiled, for the first time. Ashmead, too, chuckled at his own wit, but turned suddenly grave the next moment, and moralized. He pronounced it desirable, for the interests of mankind, that a great and rising singer should not love out of the business; outsiders were wrong-headed, and absurd, and did not understand the true artist. However, having discoursed for some time in this strain, he began to fear it might be unpalatable to her; so he stopped abruptly, and said, "But there — what is done is done. We must make the best of it: and you mustn't think I meant to run *him* down. He loves you, in his way. He must be a noble fellow, or he never could have won such a heart as yours. He won't be jealous of an old fellow like me, though I love you too, in my humdrum way, and always did. You must do me the honor to present me to him at once."

Ina stared at him: but said nothing.

"Oh," continued Ashmead, "I shall be busy till evening; but I will ask him and you to dine with me at the Kursaal, and then adjourn to the Royal box. You are a queen of song, and that is where you and he shall sit, and nowhere else."

Ina Klosking was changing color all this time, and cast a grateful but troubled look on him. "My kind, old faithful friend!" said she; then shook her head. "No, we are not to dine with you; nor sit together at the opera, in Homburg."

Ashmead looked a little chagrined. "So be it," he said, dryly. "But, at least, introduce me to him. I'll try and overcome his prejudices."

"It is not even in my power to do that."

"Oh, I see. I'm not good enough for him," said Ashmead, bitterly.

"You do yourself injustice, and him too," said Ina, courteously.

"Well, then?"

"My friend," said she deprecatingly, "he is not here."

"Not here? That is odd. Well, then, you will be dull till he comes back. Come without him; at all events, to the opera."

She turned her tortured eyes away. "I have not the heart."

This made Ashmead look at her more attentively. "Why, what is the matter?" said he. "You are in trouble. I declare you are trembling, and your eyes are filling. My poor lady — in Heaven's name, what is the matter?"

"Hush!" said Ina; "not so loud." Then she looked him in the face a little while, blushed, hesitated, faltered, and at last laid one white hand upon her bosom, that was beginning to heave, and said, with patient dignity, "My old friend — I — am — deserted."

Ashmead looked at her with amazement and incredulity. "Deserted!" said he, faintly; "you — deserted!!!"

"Yes," said she, "deserted — but perhaps not forever." Her noble eyes filled to the brim, and two tears stood ready to run over.

"Why, the man must be an idiot!" shouted Ashmead.

"Hush! not so loud. That waiter is listening: let me come to your table."

She came and sat down at his table, and he sat opposite her. They looked at each other. He waited for her to speak. With all her fortitude, her voice faltered, under the eye of sympathy.

"You are my old friend," she said; "I will try and

tell you all." But she could not all in a moment, and the two tears trickled over, and ran down her cheeks; Ashmead saw them, and burst out, "The villain! — the villain!"

"No, no," said she, "do not call him that. I could not bear it. Believe me, he is no villain." Then she dried her eyes, and said, resolutely, "If am to tell you, you must not apply harsh words to him. They would close my mouth at once, and close my heart."

"I won't say a word," said Ashmead, submissively; "so tell me all."

Ina reflected a moment, and then told her tale. Dealing now with longer sentences, she betrayed her foreign half.

"Being alone so long," said she, "has made me reflect more than in all my life before, and I now understand many things that, at the time, I could not. He, to whom I have given my love, and resigned the art in which I was advancing — with your assistance, — is, by nature, impetuous and inconstant. He was born so; and I the opposite. His love for me was too violent to last forever in any man, and it soon cooled in him, because he is inconstant by nature. He was jealous of the public: he must have all my heart, and all my time, and so he wore his own passion out. Then his great restlessness, having now no chain, became too strong for our happiness. He pined for change, as some wanderers pine for a fixed home. Is it not strange? I, a child of the theatre, am, at heart, domestic. He, a gentleman and a scholar, born, bred, and fitted to adorn the best society, is, by nature, a Bohemian."

"One word: is there another woman?"

"No, not that I know of; Heaven forbid!" said Ina. "But there is something very dreadful: there is gambling. He has a passion for it, and I fear I wearied him

by my remonstrances. He dragged me about from one gambling-place to another, and I saw that if I resisted he would go without me. He lost a fortune whilst we were together, and I do really believe he is ruined, poor dear."

Ashmead suppressed all signs of ill-temper, and asked, grimly, "Did he quarrel with you?"

"Oh no, he never said an unkind word to me: and I was not always so forbearing, for I passed months of torment. I saw that affection, which was my all, gliding gradually away from me, and the tortured will cry out. I am not an ungoverned woman, but sometimes the agony was intolerable, and I complained. Well, that agony, I long for it back; for now I am desolate."

"Poor soul! How could a man have the heart to leave you? how could he have the face?"

"Oh, he did not do it shamelessly. He left me for a week, to visit friends in England. But he wrote to me from London. He had left me at Berlin. He said that he did not like to tell me, before parting, but I must not expect to see him for six weeks; and he desired me to go to my mother, in Denmark. He would send his next letter to me there. Ah! he knew I should need my mother when his second letter came. He had planned it all, that the blow might not kill me. He wrote to tell me he was a ruined man, and he was too proud to let me support him: he begged my pardon for his love, for his desertion, for ever having crossed my brilliant path like a dark cloud. He praised me, he thanked me, he blessed me; but he left me. It was a beautiful letter; but it was the death-warrant of my heart. I was abandoned."

Ashmead started up and walked very briskly, with a great appearance of business requiring vast despatch, to the other end of the *salle;* and there, being out of Ina's

hearing, he spoke his mind to a candlestick with three branches. "D——n him! Heartless, sentimental scoundrel; d——n him! D——n him."

Having relieved his mind with this pious ejaculation, he returned to Ina at a reasonable pace and much relieved; and was now enabled to say cheerfully, "Let us take a business view of it. He is gone, gone of his own accord. Give him your blessing—I have *given* him mine—and forget him."

"Forget him! Never while I live. Is that your advice? Oh, Mr. Ashmead! And the moment I saw your friendly face, I said to myself, 'I am no longer alone: here is one that will help me.'"

"And so I will, you may be sure of that," said Ashmead, eagerly. "What is the business?"

"The business is, to find him. That is the first thing."

"But he is in England."

"Oh no; that was eight months ago. He could not stay eight months in any country; besides, there are no gambling houses there."

"And have you been eight months searching Europe for this madman?"

"No; at first pride and anger were strong, and I said, 'Here I stay till he comes back to me and to his senses.'"

"Brava!"

"Yes; but month after month went by, carrying away my pride and my anger, and leaving my affection undiminished. At last I could bear it no longer; so, as he would not come to his senses—"

"You took leave of yours, and came out on a wild-goose chase," said Ashmead, but too regretfully to affront her.

"It *was*," said Ina; "I feel it. But it is not one *now*, because I have *you* to assist me with your experience

and ability. You will find him for me, somehow or other. I know you will."

Let a woman have ever so little guile, she must have tact, if she is a true woman. Now tact, if its etymology is to be trusted, implies a fine sense and power of touch; so, in virtue of her sex, she pats a horse before she rides him, and a man before she drives him. There, ladies, there is an indictment in two counts; traverse either of them if you can.

Joseph Ashmead, thus delicately but effectually manipulated, swelled with gratified vanity, and said, "You are quite right; you can't do this sort of thing yourself — you want an agent."

"Of course I do."

"Well, you have got one. Now let me see — fifty to one he is not at Homburg at all. If he is, he most likely stays at Frankfort. He is a swell, is he not?"

"Swell!" said the Anglo-Dane, puzzled. "Not that I am aware of." She was strictly on her guard against vituperation of her beloved scamp.

"Pooh, pooh!" said Ashmead; "of course he is, and not the sort to lodge in Homburg."

"Then behold my incompetence!" said Ina.

"But *the* place to look for him is the gambling saloon. Been there?"

"Oh no."

"Then you must."

"What! Me! Alone?"

"No; with your agent."

"Oh, my friend; I said you would find him."

"What a woman! She will have it he is in Homburg. And suppose we do find him and you should not be welcome?"

"I shall not be unwelcome. *I shall be a change.*"

"Shall I tell you how to draw him to Homburg wherever he is?" said Ashmead, very demurely.

"Yes, tell me that."

"And do *me* a good turn into the bargain."

"Is it possible? can I be so fortunate?"

"Yes; and, *as you say*, it *is* a slice of luck to be able to kill two birds with one stone. Why, consider — the way to recover a man is not to run after him, but to make him run to you: it is like catching moths; you don't run out into the garden after them; you light the candle and open the window, and *they* do the rest — as he will."

"Yes, yes; but what am I to do for *you?*" asked Ina, getting a little uneasy and suspicious.

"What, didn't I tell you?" said Ashmead, with cool effrontery. "Why, only to sing for me in this little opera, that is all." And he put his hands in his pockets, and awaited thunder-claps.

"Oh, that is all, is it?" said Ina, panting a little, and turning two great reproachful eyes on him.

"That is all," said he stoutly. "Why, what attracted him at first? Wasn't it your singing, the admiration of the public, the bouquets and bravas? What caught the moth once will catch it again — 'moping' won't. And surely you will not refuse to draw him, merely because you can pull me out of a fix into the bargain. Look here: I have undertaken to find a singer by to-morrow night; and what chance is there of my getting even a third-rate one? Why, the very hour I have spent so agreeably, talking to you, has diminished my chance."

"Oh," said Ina, "this is *driving* me into your net."

"I own it," said Joseph, cheerfully: "I'm quite unscrupulous, because I know you will thank me afterwards."

"The very idea of going back to the stage makes me tremble," said Ina.

"Of course it does; and those who tremble succeed.

In a long experience I never knew an instance to the contrary. It is the conceited fools, who feel safe, that are in danger."

"What is the part?"

"One you know — Siebel in 'Faust,' with two new songs."

"Excuse me, I do not know it."

"Why, everybody knows it."

"You mean everybody has heard it sung. I know neither the music nor the words, and I cannot sing incorrectly even for you."

"Oh, you can master the airs in a day; and the cackle in half an hour."

"I am not so expeditious. If you are serious, get me the book — oh, he calls the poet's words the cackle! — and the music of the part directly, and borrow me the score."

"Borrow you the score! Ah! that shows the school you were bred in. I gaze at you with admiration."

"Then please don't, for we have not a moment to waste. You have terrified me out of my senses. Fly!"

"Yes; but before I fly, there is something to be settled — salary!"

"As much as they will give."

"Of course; but give me a hint."

"No, no; you will get me some money, for I am poor! I gave all my savings to my dear mother, and settled her on a farm in dear old Denmark. But I really sing for *you* more than for Homburg; so make no difficulties. Above all, do not discuss salary with me. Settle it and draw it for me, and let me hear no more about that. I am on thorns."

He soon found the director, and told him, excitedly, there was a way out of his present difficulty. Ina Klosking was in the town. He had implored her to

return to the opera. She had refused at first; but he had used all his influence with her, and at last had obtained a half promise on conditions — a two months' engagement; certain parts, which he specified, out of his own head; salary, a hundred thalers per night, and a half clear benefit on her last appearance.

The director demurred to the salary.

Ashmead said he was mad; she was the German Alboni, her low notes like a trumpet, and the compass of a mezzo-soprano besides.

The director yielded, and drew up the engagement in duplicate. Ashmead then borrowed the music, and came back to the inn triumphant. He waved the agreement over his head, then submitted it to her. She glanced at it, made a wry face, and said, "Two months! I never dreamed of such a thing."

"Not worth your while to do it for less," said Ashmead. "Come," said he, authoritatively; "you have got a good bargain every way! so sign."

She lifted her head high, and looked at him like a lioness, at being ordered.

Ashmead replied by putting the paper before her and giving her the pen.

She cast one more reproachful glance, then signed like a lamb.

"Now," said she, turning fretful. "I want a piano."

"You shall have one," said he, coaxingly. He went to the landlord and inquired if there was a piano in the house.

"Yes, there is one," said he.

"And it is mine," said a sharp female voice.

"May I beg the use of it?"

"No," said the lady, a tall bony spinster. "I cannot have it strummed on and put out of tune by everybody."

"But this is not everybody. The lady I want it for is a professional musician. Top of the tree."

"The hardest strummers going."

"But, mademoiselle, this lady is going to sing at the opera. She *must* study. She *must* have a piano."

"But (grimly) she need not have mine."

"Then she must leave the hotel."

"Oh (haughtily), *that* is as she pleases."

Ashmead went to Ina Klosking in a rage and told her all this, and said he would take her to another hotel kept by a Frenchman; these Germans were bears. But Ina Klosking just shrugged her shoulders, and said, "Take me to her."

He did so; and she said in German, "Madam, I can quite understand your reluctance to have your piano strummed. But, as your hotel is quiet and respectable, and I am unwilling to leave it, will you permit me to play to you, and then you shall decide whether I am worthy to stay or not?"

The spinster drank those mellow accents; colored a little, looked keenly at the speaker, and, after a moment's reflection, said, half sullenly, "No, madam, you are polite. I must risk my poor piano. Be pleased to come with me."

She then conducted them to a large unoccupied room on the first floor, and unlocked the piano, a very fine one, and in perfect tune.

Ina sat down, and performed a composition then in vogue.

"You play correctly, madam," said the spinster; "but your music — what stuff! Such things are null. They vex the ear a little, but they never reach the mind."

Ashmead was wroth, and could hardly contain himself; but the Klosking was amused, and rather pleased. "Mademoiselle has positive tastes in music," said she; "all the better."

"Yes," said the spinster, "most music is mere noise. I hate and despise forty-nine compositions out of fifty; but the fiftieth I adore. Give me something simple, with a little soul in it — if you can."

Ina Klosking looked at her, and observed her age and her dress, the latter old-fashioned. She said quietly, "Will mademoiselle do me the honor to stand before me? I will sing her a trifle my mother taught me."

The spinster complied, and stood erect and stiff, with her arms folded. Ina fixed her deep eyes on her, playing a liquid prelude all the time, then swelled her chest and sang the old Venetian canzonet, "Il pescatore dell' onda." It is a small thing, but there is no limit to the genius of song. The Klosking sang this trifle with a voice so grand, sonorous, and sweet, and, above all, with such feeling, taste, and purity, that somehow she transported her hearers to Venetian waters, moonlit, and thrilled them to the heart; while the great glass chandelier kept ringing very audibly, so true, massive, and vibrating were her tones in that large empty room.

At the first verse that cross-grained spinster, with real likes and dislikes, put a bony hand quietly before her eyes. At the last, she made three strides, as a soldier marches, and fell all of a piece, like a wooden *mannequin*, on the singer's neck. "Take my piano," she sobbed, "for you have taken the heart out of my body."

Ina returned her embrace, and did not conceal her pleasure. "I am very proud of such a conquest," said she.

From that hour Ina was the landlady's pet. The room and piano were made over to her, and, being in a great fright at what she had undertaken, she studied and practised her part night and day. She made Ashmead call a rehearsal next day, and she came home from it wretched and almost hysterical.

She summoned her slave Ashmead; he stood before her with an air of hypocritical submission.

"The flute was not at rehearsal, sir," said she severely; "nor the oboe, nor the violoncello."

"Just like 'em," said Ashmead, tranquilly.

"The tenor is a quavering stick. He is one of those who think that an unmanly trembling of the voice represents every manly passion."

"Their name is legion."

"The soprano is insipid. And they are all imperfect — contentedly imperfect. How can people sing incorrectly? It is like lying."

"That is what makes it so common; he! he!"

"I do not desire wit, but consolation. I believe you are Mephistopheles himself in disguise: for ever since I signed that diabolical compact you made me, I have been in a state of terror, agitation, misgiving, and misery — and I thank and bless you for it; for these thorns and nettles they lacerate me, and make me live. They break the dull lethargic agony of utter desolation."

Then as her nerves were female nerves, and her fortitude female fortitude, she gave way, for once, and began to cry patiently.

Ashmead the practical went softly away, and left her, as we must leave her for a time, to battle her business with one hand, and her sorrow with the other.

CHAPTER II.

In the Hotel de Russie, at Frankfort, there was a grand apartment, lofty, spacious, and richly furnished, with a broad balcony overlooking the Platz, and roofed, so to speak, with colored sun-blinds, which softened the glare of the Rhineland sun to a rosy and mellow delight.

In the veranda, a tall English gentleman was leaning over the balcony, smoking a cigar, and being courted by a fair young lady; her light-gray eyes dwelt on him in a way to magnetize a man; and she purred pretty nothings at his ear, in a soft tone she reserved for males; her voice was clear, loud, and rather high-pitched whenever she spoke to a person of her own sex; a comely English blonde, with pale eyelashes; a keen, sensible girl, and not a downright wicked one; only born artful. This was Fanny Dover; and the tall gentleman — whose relation she was, and whose wife she resolved to be in one year, three years, or ten, according to his power of resistance — was Harrington Vizard, a Barfordshire squire, with twelve thousand acres, and a library.

As for Fanny, she had only two thousand pounds in all the world; so compensating Nature endowed her with a fair complexion, gray mesmeric eyes, art, and resolution — qualities that often enable a poor girl to conquer landed estates, with their male incumbrances.

Beautiful and delicate — on the surface — as was Miss Dover's courtship of her first cousin once removed, it did not strike fire; it neither pleased nor annoyed him; it fell as dead as a lantern firing on an iceberg. Not that he disliked her by any means. But he was thirty-two,

had seen the world, and had been unlucky with women. So he was now a *divorcé*, and a declared woman-hater; railed on them, and kept them at arm's length, Fanny Dover included. It was really comical to see with what perfect coolness and cynical apathy he parried the stealthy advances of this cat-like girl, a mistress in the art of pleasing — when she chose.

Inside the room, on a couch of crimson velvet, sat a young lady of rare and dazzling beauty. Her face was a long but perfect oval, pure forehead, straight nose, with exquisite nostrils; coral lips, and ivory teeth. But what first struck the beholder were her glorious dark eyes, and magnificent eyebrows as black as jet. Her hair was really like a raven's dark purple wing.

These beauties, in a stern character, might have inspired awe; the more so as her form and limbs were grand and statuesque for her age; but all was softened down to sweet womanhood by long silken lashes, often lowered, and a gracious face that blushed at a word, blushed little, blushed much, blushed pinky, blushed pink, blushed roseate, blushed rosy; and, I am sorry to say, blushed crimson, and even scarlet, in the course of those events I am about to record, as unblushing as turnip, and cool as cucumber. This scale of blushes arose not out of modesty alone, but out of the wide range of her sensibility. On hearing of a noble deed, she blushed warm approbation; at a worthy sentiment, she blushed heartfelt sympathy. If you said a thing at the fire that might hurt some person at the farthest window, she would blush for fear it should be overheard, and cause pain.

In short, it was her peculiarity to blush readily for matters quite outside herself, and to show the male observer (if any) the amazing sensibility, apart from egotism, that sometimes adorns a young, high-minded woman, not yet hardened by the world.

This young lady was Zoe Vizard, daughter of Harrington's father by a Greek mother who died when she was twelve years of age. Her mixed origin showed itself curiously: in her figure and face she was all Greek, even to her hand, which was moulded divinely, but as long and large as befitted her long, grand, antique arm; but her mind was northern; not a grain of Greek subtlety in it. Indeed she would have made a poor hand at dark deceit, with a transparent face, and eloquent blood, that kept coursing from her heart to her cheeks and back again, and painting her thoughts upon her countenance.

Having installed herself, with feminine instinct, in a crimson couch that framed her to perfection, Zoe Vizard was at work — embroidering. She had some flowers, and their leaves, lying near her on a little table, and, with colored silks, *chenille*, etc., she imitated each flower and its leaf very adroitly, without a pattern. This was clever, and, indeed, rather a rare talent; but she lowered her head over this work with a demure, beaming complacency embroidery alone never yet excited without external assistance. Accordingly, on a large stool, or little ottoman, at her feet, but at a respectful distance, sat a young man, almost a match in beauty, though in quite another style. In height about five feet ten, broad-shouldered, clean built, a model of strength, agility, and grace; his face fair, fresh, and healthy-looking; his large eyes hazel; the crisp curling hair on his shapely head a wonderful brown in the mass, but with one thin streak of gold above the forehead and all the loose hairs glittering golden; a short-clipped mustache saved him from looking too feminine, yet did not hide his expressive mouth; he had white hands, as soft and supple as a woman's, a mellow voice, and a winning tongue. This dangerous young gentleman was gazing softly on Zoe Vizard and purring in her ear; and she was conscious of

his gaze, without looking at him, and was sipping the honey, and showed it by seeming more absorbed in her work than girls ever really are.

Matters, however, had not gone openly very far. She was still on her defence; so, after imbibing his flatteries demurely a long time, she discovered, all in one moment, that they were objectionable. "Dear me, Mr. Severne," said she, "you do nothing but pay compliments."

"How can I help it, sitting here?" inquired he.

"There — there," said she; then, quietly, "Does it never occur to you that only foolish people are pleased with flatteries?"

"I have heard that, but I don't believe it. I know it makes me awfully happy whenever you say a kind word of me."

"That is far from proving your wisdom," said Zoe; "and, instead of dwelling on my perfections, which do not exist, I wish you would *tell* me things."

"What things?"

"How can I tell, till I hear them? Well, then, things about yourself."

"That is a poor subject."

"Let me be the judge."

"Oh, there are lots of fellows who are always talking about themselves; let me be an exception."

This answer puzzled Zoe, and she was silent, and put on a cold look. She was not accustomed to be refused anything reasonable.

Severne examined her closely, and saw he was expected to obey her; he then resolved to prepare, in a day or two, an autobiography full of details, that should satisfy Zoe's curiosity, and win her admiration and her love. But he could not do it all in a moment, because his memory of his real life obstructed his fancy. Meantime he operated a diversion. He said, "Set a poor fellow an

example. Tell me something about *yourself* — since I have the bad taste, and the presumption, to be interested in you, and can't help it. Did you spring from the foam of the Archipelago? or are you descended from Bacchus and Ariadne?"

"If you want sensible answers, ask sensible questions," said Zoe, trying to frown him down with her black brows; but her sweet cheek would tint itself, and her sweet mouth smile and expose much intercoral ivory.

"Well, then," said he, "I will ask you a prosaic question, and I only hope you won't think it impertinent. How — ever — did such a strangely assorted party as yours, come to travel together? and, if Vizard has turned woman-hater, as he pretends, how comes he to be at the head of a female party, who are not *all* of them — " he hesitated.

"Go on, Mr. Severne; not all of them, what?" said Zoe, prepared to stand up for her sex.

"Not perfect?"

"That is a very cautious statement, and — there — you are as slippery as an eel; there is no getting hold of you. Well, never mind, I will set you an example of communicativeness, and reveal this mystery hidden as yet from mankind."

"Speak, dread queen; thy servant heareth."

"Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Severne, you amuse *me*."

"You only interest *me*," was the soft reply.

Zoe blushed pink, but turned it off. "Then why do you not attend to my interesting narrative, instead of — Well, then, it began with my asking the dear fellow to take me a tour, especially to Rome."

"You wanted to see the statues of your ancestors, and shame them."

"Much obliged; I was not quite such a goose. I wanted to see the Tiber, and the Colosseum, and Trajan's

pillar, and the Tarpeian rock, and the one everlasting city that binds ancient and modern history together."

She flashed her great eyes on him, and he was dumb. She had risen above the region of his ideas. Having silenced her commentator, she returned to her story. "Well, dear Harrington said 'yes,' directly. So then I told Fanny; and she said, 'Oh, do take me with you!' Now, of course, I was only too glad to have Fanny; she is my relation, and my friend."

"Happy girl!"

"Be quiet, please. So I asked Harrington to let me have Fanny with us, and you should have seen his face. What! he travel with a couple of us! He — I don't see why I should tell you what the monster said."

"Oh, yes, please do."

"You won't go telling anybody else then?"

"Not a living soul, upon my honor."

"Well then, he said" — she began to blush like a rose — "that he looked on me as a mere female in embryo; I had not yet developed the vices of my sex. But Fanny Dover was a ripe flirt, and she would set me flirting, and how could he manage the pair? In short, sir, he refused to take us, and gave his reasons, such as they were, poor dear! Then I had to tell Fanny. Then she began to cry, and told me to go without her. But I would not do that, when I had once asked her. Then she clung round my neck and kissed me, and begged me to be cross and sullen, and tire out dear Harrington."

"That is like her."

"How do you know?" said Zoe, sharply.

"Oh, I have studied her character."

"When, pray?" said Zoe, ironically, yet blushing a little, because her secret meaning was, "You are always at my apron-strings, and have no time to fathom Fanny."

"When I have nothing better to do; when you are out of the room."

"Well, I shall be out of the room very soon, if you say another word."

"And serve me right, too. I am a fool to talk, when you allow me to listen."

"He is incorrigible," said Zoe, pathetically. "Well, then, I refused to pout at Harrington. It is not as if he had no reason to distrust women, poor dear darling! I invited Fanny to stay a month with us; and, when once she was in the house, she soon got over me, and persuaded me to play sad, and showed me how to do it. So we wore long faces, and sweet resignation, and were never cross, but kept turning tearful eyes upon our victim."

"Ha! ha! How absurd of Vizard to tell you that two women would be too much for one man."

"No, it was the truth; and girls are artful creatures, especially when they put their heads together. But hear the end of all our cunning. One day, after dinner, Harrington asked us to sit opposite him; so we did, and felt guilty. He surveyed us in silence a little while, and then he said: 'My young friends, you have played your little game pretty well, especially you, Zoe, that are a novice in the fine arts compared with Miss Dover.' Histrionic talent ought to be rewarded; he would relent, and take us abroad, on one condition: there must be a chaperon. 'All the better,' said we hypocrites, eagerly; 'and who?'

"'Oh, a person equal to the occasion — an old maid as bitter against men as ever grapes were sour. She would follow us up-stairs, down-stairs, and into my lady's chamber. She would have an eye at the keyhole by day, and an ear by night, when we went up to bed and talked over the events of our frivolous day.' In short, he enumerated our duenna's perfections till our blood ran cold; and it was ever so long before he would tell us

who it was — Aunt Maitland. We screamed with surprise. They are like cat and dog, and never agree except to differ. We asked an explanation of this strange choice. He obliged us. 'It was not for his gratification he took the old cat, it was for us. She would relieve him of a vast responsibility. The vices of her character would prove too strong for the little faults of ours, which were only volatility, frivolity, flirtation' — I will *not* tell you what he said."

"I seem to hear Harrington talking," said Severne. "What on earth makes him so hard upon women? Would you mind telling me that?"

"Never ask me that question again," said Zoe, with sudden gravity.

"Well, I won't; I'll get it out of him."

"If you say a word to him about it, I shall be shocked and offended."

She was pale and red by turns; but Severne bowed his head with a respectful submission that disarmed her directly. She turned her head away, and Severne, watching her, saw her eyes fill.

"How is it," said she thoughtfully, and looking away from him, "that men leave out their sisters, when they sum up womankind? Are not we women too? My poor brother quite forgets he has one woman who will never, never desert nor deceive him; dear, darling fellow!" and with these three last words she rose, and kissed the tips of her fingers, and waved the kiss to Vizard with that free magnitude of gesture which belonged to antiquity: it struck the Anglo-Saxon flirt at her feet with amazement. Not having good enough under his skin to sympathize with that pious impulse, he first stagnated a little while, and then, not to be silent altogether, made his little, stale, commonplace comment on what she had told him. "Why, it is like a novel."

"A very unromantic one," replied Zoe.

"I don't know that. I have read very interesting novels with fewer new characters than this: there's a dark beauty and a fair, and a duenna with an eagle eye and an aquiline nose."

"Hush!" said Zoe; "that is her room:" and pointed to a chamber-door that opened into the apartment.

Oh, marvellous female instinct! The duenna in charge was, at that moment, behind that very door, and her eye and her ear at the keyhole, turn about.

Severne continued his remarks, but in a lower voice.

"Then there's a woman-hater and a man-hater: good for dialogue."

Now, this banter did not please Zoe; so she fixed her eyes upon Severne, and said, "You forget the principal figure — a mysterious young gentleman who looks nineteen and is twenty-nine, and was lost sight of in England nine years ago. He has been travelling ever since, and wherever he went he flirted; we gather so much, from his accomplishment in the art: fluent, not to say voluble at times, but no egotist; for he never tells you anything about himself, nor even about his family; still less about the numerous *affaires de cœur* in which he has been engaged. Perhaps he is reserving it all for the third volume."

The attack was strong and sudden, but it failed. Severne, within the limits of his experience, was a consummate artist, and this situation was not new to him. He cast one gently reproachful glance on her, then lowered his eyes to the carpet, and kept them there. "Do you think," said he, in a low dejected voice, "it can be any pleasure to a man to relate the follies of an idle, aimless life — and to you, who have given me higher aspirations, and made me awfully sorry I cannot live my whole life over again? I can't bear to think of the

years I have wasted," said he; "and how can I talk to you, whom I reverence, of the past follies I despise? No, pray don't ask me to risk your esteem. It is so dear to me."

Then this artist put into practice a little manœuvre he had learned, of compressing his muscles, and forcing a little unwilling water into his eyes. So, at the end of his pretty little speech, he raised two gentle imploring eyes, with half a tear in each of them. To be sure, nature assisted his art for once; he did bitterly regret, but out of pure egotism, the years he had wasted, and wished, with all his heart, he had never known any woman but Zoe Vizard.

The combination of art and sincerity were too much for the guileless and inexperienced Zoe. She was grieved at the pain she had given, and rose to retire, for she felt they were both on dangerous ground: but, as she turned away, she made a little deprecating gesture, and said softly, "Forgive me."

That soft tone gave Severne courage, and that gesture gave him an opportunity; he seized her hand, murmured, "Angel of goodness!" and bestowed a long, loving kiss on her hand that made it quiver under his lips.

"Oh!" cried Miss Maitland, bursting into the room at the nick of time, yet feigning amazement. Fanny heard the ejaculation, and whipped away from Harrington, into the window. Zoe, with no motive but her own coyness, had already snatched her hand away from Severne.

But both young ladies were one moment too late. The eagle eye of a terrible old maid had embraced the entire situation, and they saw she had.

Harrington Vizard, Esq., smoked on, with his back to the group. But the rest were a picture: the mutinous

face and keen eyes of Fanny Dover, bristling with defence, at the window; Zoe blushing crimson, and newly started away from her too enterprising wooer; and the tall, thin, grim old maid, standing stiff, as sentinel, at the bedroom door, and gimleting both her charges alternately with steel-gray orbs, — she seemed like an owl, all eyes and beak.

When the chaperon had fixed the situation thoroughly, she stalked erect into the room, and said, very expressively, —

"I am afraid I disturb you."

Zoe, from crimson, blushed scarlet, and hung her head; but Fanny was ready.

"La! aunt," said she, ironically, and with pertness infinite, "you know you are always welcome. Wherever have you been all this time? We were afraid we had lost you."

Aunt fired her pistol in reply: "I was not far off — most fortunately."

Zoe, finding that, even under crushing circumstances, Fanny had fight in her, glided instantly to her side, and Aunt Maitland opened battle all round.

"May I ask, sir," said she to Severne, with a horrible smile, "what you were doing when I came in?"

Zoe clutched Fanny, and both awaited Mr. Severne's reply for one moment with keen anxiety.

"My dear Miss Maitland," said that able young man very respectfully, yet with a sort of cheerful readiness, as if he was delighted at her deigning to question him, "to tell you the truth, I was admiring Miss Vizard's diamond ring."

Fanny tittered, Zoe blushed again at such a fib and such *aplomb*.

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Maitland; "you were admiring it very close, sir."

"It is like herself — it will bear inspection."

This was wormwood to Miss Maitland. "Even in our ashes live their wonted fires;" and, though she was sixty, she disliked to hear a young woman praised. She bridled, then returned to the attack.

"Next time you wish to inspect it, you had better ask her *to take it off* and show you."

"May I, Miss Maitland?" inquired the ingenuous youth. "She would not think that a liberty?"

His mild effrontery staggered her for a moment, and she glared at him speechless; but soon recovered, and said bitterly, "Evidently *not*." With this she turned her back on him rather ungraciously, and opened fire on her own sex.

"Zoe!" sharply.

"Yes, aunt," faintly.

"Tell your brother — if he can leave off smoking — I wish to speak to him."

Zoe hung her head, and was in no hurry to bring about the proposed conference.

While she deliberated, says Fanny, with vast alacrity, "I'll tell him, aunt."

"O Fanny!" murmured Zoe, in a reproachful whisper.

"All right!" whispered Fanny in reply, and whipped out on to the balcony. "Here's Aunt Maitland wants to know if you ever leave off smoking," and she threw a most aggressive manner into the query.

The big man replied composedly, "Tell her I do at meals and prayers; but I always *sleep* with a pipe in my mouth — heavily insured!"

"Well, then, you mustn't; for she has something very particular to say to you, when you've done smoking."

"Something particular! That means something disagreeable. Tell her I shall be smoking all day to-day."

Fanny danced into the room, and said, "He says he shall be smoking all day *under the circumstances.*"

Miss Maitland gave this faithful messenger the look of a basilisk, and flounced to her own room. The young ladies instantly stepped out on the balcony, and got one on each side of Harrington, with the feminine instinct of propitiation; for they felt sure the enemy would tell, soon or late.

"What does the old cat want to talk to me about?" said Harrington, lazily, to Fanny.

It was Zoe who replied, —

"Can't you guess, dear?" said she tenderly — "our misconduct." Then she put her head on his shoulder, as much as to say, "But we have a more lenient judge here."

"As if I could not see *that* without her assistance," said Harrington Vizard. (Puff!) At which comfortable reply Zoe looked very rueful, and Fanny burst out laughing.

Soon after this, Fanny gave Zoe a look, and they retired to their rooms; and Zoe said she would never come out again, and Fanny must stay with her. Fanny felt sure *ennui* would thaw that resolve in a few hours; so she submitted, but declared it was absurd, and the very way to give a perfect trifle importance.

"Kiss your hand!" said she disdainfully, "that is nothing. If I were the man, I'd have kissed both your cheeks long before this."

"And I should have boxed your ears and made you cry," said Zoe, with calm superiority.

So she had her way, and the deserted Severne felt dull, but was too good a general to show it; he bestowed his welcome company on Mr. Vizard, walked with him, talked with him, and made himself so agreeable, that Vizard, who admired him greatly, said to him, "What a good

fellow you are to bestow your sunshine on me! I began to be afraid those girls had got you, and tied you to their apron-strings altogether."

"Oh, no," said Severne, "they are charming; but, after all, one can't do without a male friend; there are so few things that interest ladies. Unless you can talk red-hot religion, you are bound to flirt with them a little. To be sure, they look shy — if you do; but, if you don't — "

"They *are* bored, whereas they only *looked* shy. I know 'em. Call another subject, please."

"Well, I will; but perhaps it may not be so agreeable a one."

"That is very unlikely," said the woman-hater dryly.

"Well, it is Tin. I'm rather short. You see, when I fell in with you at Monaco, I had no idea of coming this way; but meeting with an old college friend — what a tie college is, isn't it? there is nothing like it; when you have been at college with a man, you seem never to wear him out, as you do the acquaintances you make afterwards."

"That is very true," said Vizard warmly.

"Isn't it? Now, for instance, if I had only known you of late years, I should feel awfully shy of borrowing a few hundreds of you — for a month or two."

"I don't know why you should, old fellow."

"I should, though. But having been at college together makes all the difference. I don't mind telling you that I have never been at Homburg, without taking a turn at the table, and I am grizzling awfully now at not having sent to my man of business for funds."

"How much do you want? that is the only question."

"Glad to hear it," thought Severne. "Well, let me see, you can't back your luck with less than five hundred."

"Well, but we have been out two months; I am afraid I haven't so much left. Just let me see." He took out

his pocket-book, and examined his letter of credit. "Do you want it to-day?"

"Why, yes; I do."

"Well, then, I am afraid you can only have three hundred. But I will telegraph Herries, and funds will be here to-morrow afternoon."

"All right," said Severne.

Vizard took him to the bank, and exhausted his letter of credit; then to the telegraph office, and telegraphed Herries to enlarge his credit at once. He handed Severne the three hundred pounds. The young man's eye flashed, and it cost him an effort not to snatch them and wave them over his head, with joy; but he controlled himself, and took them like twopence halfpenny.

"Thank you, old fellow," said he. Then, still more carelessly, "Like my I O U?"

"As you please," said Vizard, with similar indifference, only real.

After he had got the money, Severne's conversational powers relaxed — short answers — long reveries.

Vizard observed, stopped short, and eyed him. "I remember something at Oxford, and I am afraid you are a gambler; if you are, you won't be good for much till you have lost that three hundred. It will be a dull evening for me, without you: I know what I'll do — I'll take my hen-party to the opera at Homburg. There are stalls to be got here. I'll get one for you, on the chance of your dropping in."

The stalls were purchased, and the friends returned at once to the hotel, to give the ladies timely intimation. They found Fanny and Zoe seated, rather disconsolate, in the apartment Zoe had formally renounced; at sight of the stall tickets, the pair uttered joyful cries, looked at each other and vanished.

"You won't see *them* any more till dinner-time," said

Vizard. "They will be discussing dress, selecting dress, trying dresses, and changing dresses, for the next three hours." He turned round whilst speaking, and there was Severne slipping away to his own bedroom.

Thus deserted on all sides, he stepped into the balcony and lighted a cigar. Whilst he was smoking it he observed an English gentleman with a stalwart figure and a beautiful brown beard, standing on the steps of the hotel. "Hallo!" said he, and hailed him. "Hy! Uxmoor! is that you?"

Lord Uxmoor looked up, and knew him. He entered the hotel, and the next minute the waiter ushered him into Vizard's sitting-room.

Lord Uxmoor, like Mr. Vizard, was a landed proprietor in Barfordshire. The county is large, and they lived too many miles apart to visit; but they met, and agreed, at elections and county business, and had a respect for each other.

Meeting at Frankfort, these two found plenty to say to each other about home; and as Lord Uxmoor was alone, Vizard asked him to dine. "You will balance us," said he; "we are terribly over-petticoated, and one of them is an old maid. We generally dine at the *table-d'hôte*, but I have ordered dinner *here* to-day; we are going to the opera at Homburg. You are not obliged to do that, you know. You are in for a bad dinner, that is all."

"To tell the truth," said Lord Uxmoor, "I don't care for music."

"Then you deserve a statue for not pretending to love it. I adore it, for my part; and I wish I was going alone, for my hens will be sure to cackle *mal-à-propos*, and spoil some famous melody with talking about it, and who sang it in London, instead of listening to it, and thanking God for it, in deep silence."

Lord Uxmoor stared a little at this sudden sally, for

he was unacquainted with Vizard's one eccentricity, having met him only on county business, at which he was extra rational, and passed for a great scholar. He really did suck good books as well as cigars.

After a few more words, they parted till dinner-time.

Lord Uxmoor came to his appointment, and found his host and Miss Maitland, whom he knew; and he was in languid conversation with them, when a side-door opened, and in walked Fanny Dover, fair and bright, in Cambridge blue, her hair well dressed by Zoe's maid in the style of the day. Lord Uxmoor rose, and received his fair countrywoman with respectful zeal; he had met her once before. She too sparkled with pleasure at meeting a Barfordshire squire with a long pedigree, purse, and beard, three things she admired greatly.

In the midst of this, in glided Zoe, and seemed to extinguish everybody, and even to pale the lights, with her dark, yet sun-like beauty. She was dressed in a creamy-white satin that glinted like mother-of-pearl, its sheen and glory unfrittered with a single idiotic trimming; on her breast a large diamond cross. Her head was an Athenian sculpture — no chignon, but the tight coils of antiquity; at their side one diamond star sparkled vivid flame, by its contrast with those polished ebon snakes.

Lord Uxmoor was dazzled, transfixed, at the vision, and bowed very low when Vizard introduced him in an off-hand way, saying, "My sister, Miss Vizard — but I dare say you have met her at the county balls."

"I have never been so fortunate," said Uxmoor, humbly.

"I have," said Zoe; "that is, I saw you waltzing with Lady Betty Gore, at the race ball, two years ago."

"What!" said Vizard, alarmed. "Uxmoor, were you waltzing with Lady Betty Gore?"

"You have it on too high an authority for me to contradict."

Finding Zoe was to be trusted as a county chronicle, Vizard turned sharply to her and said, "And was he flirting with her?"

Zoe colored a little, and said, "Now, Harrington, how can I tell?"

"You little hypocrite," said Vizard, "who can tell better?"

At this retort Zoe blushed high, and the water came into her eyes.

Nobody minded that but Uxmoor, and Vizard went on to explain, "That Lady Betty Gore is as heartless a coquette as any in the county, and don't you flirt with her, or you will get entangled."

"You disapprove of her," said Uxmoor, coolly; "then I give her up forever." He looked at Zoe whilst he said this, and felt how easy it would be to resign Lady Betty and a great many more for this peerless creature. He did not mean her to understand what was passing in his mind; he did not know how subtle and observant the most innocent girl is in such matters. Zoe blushed, and drew away from him. Just then Ned Severne came in, and Vizard introduced him to Uxmoor with great geniality and pride. The charming young man was in a black surtout, with a blue scarf, the very tint for his complexion.

The girls looked at one another, and in a moment Fanny was elected Zoe's agent: she signalled Severne, and when he came to her she said, for Zoe, "Don't you know we are going to the opera at Homburg?"

"Yes, I know," said he; "and I hope you will have a pleasanter evening than I shall."

"You are not coming with us?"

"No," said he, sorrowfully.

"You had better," said Fanny, with a deal of quiet point — more, indeed, than Zoe's pride approved.

"Not if Mr. Severne has something more attractive," said she, turning palish and pinkish by turns.

All this went on *sotto voce*, and Uxmoor, out of good breeding, entered into conversation with Miss Maitland and Vizard. Severne availed himself of this diversion, and fixed his eyes on Zoe, with an air of gentle reproach, then took a letter out of his pocket, and handed it to Fanny. She read it and gave it to Zoe.

It was dated from the "Golden Star," Homburg.

DEAR NED, — I am worse to-day, and all alone. Now and then I almost fear I may not pull through. But perhaps that is through being so hipped. Do come and spend this evening with me like a good kind fellow.

Telegraph reply. S. T.

"Poor fellow," said Ned: "my heart bleeds for him."

Zoe was affected by this, and turned liquid and loving eyes on "dear Ned." But Fanny stood her ground. "Go to 'S. T.' to-morrow morning, but don't desert 'Z. V.' and 'F. D.' to-night." Zoe smiled.

"But I have telegraphed," objected Ned.

"Then telegraph again — *not*," said Fanny, firmly.

Now this was unexpected. Severne had set his heart upon *rouge et noir*, but still he was afraid of offending Zoe; and, besides, he saw Uxmoor with his noble beard and brown eyes, casting rapturous glances at her. "Let Miss Vizard decide," said he. "Don't let me be so unhappy as to offend her twice in one day."

Zoe's pride and goodness dictated her answer, in spite of her wishes. She said in a low voice, "Go to your sick friend."

"There," said Severne.

"I hear," said Fanny. "She means 'go; but you shall repent it.'"

"I mean what I say," said Zoe, with real dignity. "It

is my habit." And the next moment she quietly left the room.

She sat down in her bedroom, mortified and alarmed. What! had it come to this, that she felt her heart turn cold, just because that young man said he could not accompany her — on a single evening! Then first she discovered that it was for him she had dressed, and had for once beautified her beauty — for *him;* that with Fanny she had dwelt upon the delights of the music, but had secretly thought of appearing publicly on *his* arm, and dazzling people by their united and contrasted beauty.

She rose, all of a sudden, and looked keenly at herself in the glass, to see if she had not somehow overrated her attractions. But the glass was reassuring; it told her not one man in a million could go to a sick friend that night, when he might pass the evening by her side, and visit his friend early in the morning.

Tears of mortified vanity were in her eyes: but she smiled through them at the glass; then dried them carefully, and went back to the dining-room radiant to all appearance.

Dinner was just served, and her brother, to do honor to the new-comer, waved his sister to a seat by Lord Uxmoor. He looked charmed at the arrangement, and showed a great desire to please her, but at first was unable to find good topics. After several timid overtures on his part, she assisted him, out of good-nature. She knew, by report, that he was a very benevolent young man, bent on improving the homes, habits, wages, and comforts of the agricultural poor. She led him to this, and his eyes sparkled with pleasure, and his homely but manly face lighted and was elevated by the sympathy she expressed in these worthy objects. He could not help thinking, "What a Lady Uxmoor this would make! She and I and her brother might leaven the county."

And all this time she would not even bestow a glance on Severne. She was not an angel. She had said, "Go to your sick friend;" but she had not said, "I will smart alone — if you *do*."

Severne sat by Fanny, and seemed dejected, but, as usual, polite and charming. She was smilingly cruel; regaled him with Lord Uxmoor's wealth and virtues, and said he was an excellent match, and all she-Barfordshire pulling caps for him. Severne only sighed; he offered no resistance; and at last she could not go on nagging a handsome fellow who only sighed, so she said, "Well, *there;* I advise you to join us before the opera is over, that is all."

"I will, I will!" said he eagerly. "Oh, thank you."

Dinner was despatched rather rapidly, because of the opera.

When the ladies got their cloaks and lace scarfs to put over their heads coming home, the party proved to be only three, and the tickets five: for Miss Maitland pleaded headache.

On this, Lord Uxmoor said, rather timidly, he should like to go.

"Why, you said you hated music," said Vizard.

Lord Uxmoor colored. "I recant," said he, bluntly; and everybody saw what had operated his conversion.

It is half an hour, by rail, from Frankfort to Homburg, and the party could not be seated together. Vizard bestowed Zoe and Lord Uxmoor in one carriage, Fanny and Severne in another, and himself and a cigar in a third. Severne sat gazing piteously on Fanny Dover, but never said a word. She eyed him satirically for a good while, and then she said, cheerfully, "Well, Mr. Severne, how do you like the turn things are taking?"

"Miss Dover, I am very unhappy."

"Serves you right."

"Oh, pray don't say that. It is on you I depend."

"On me, sir! What have I to do with your flirtations?"

"No; but you are so clever and so good. If, for once, you will take a poor fellow's part with Miss Vizard, behind my back; oh, please do! pray do!" and, in the ardor of entreaty, he caught Fanny's white hand, and kissed it with warm but respectful devotion. Indeed he held it, and kissed it again and again, till Fanny, though she minded it no more than marble, was going to ask him satirically whether he had not almost done with it, when at last he contrived to squeeze out one of his little hysterical tears, and drop it on her hand.

Now, the girl was not butter, like some of her sex; far from it; but neither was she wood; indeed, she was not old enough for that, so this crocodile tear won her for the time being. "There, there," said she, "don't be a baby! I'll be on your side to-night; only, if you care for her, come and look after her yourself. Beautiful women with money won't stand neglect, Mr. Severne; and why should they? They are not like poor me: they have got the game in their hands."

The train stopped. Vizard's party drove to the opera, and Severne ordered a cab "to the Golden Star," meaning to stop it, and get out; but, looking at his watch, he found it wanted half an hour to gambling time, so he settled to have a cup of coffee first and a cigar. With this view, he let the man drive him to the "Golden Star."

CHAPTER III.

Ina Klosking worked night and day upon "Siebel," in Gounod's "Faust," and the songs that had been added to give weight to the part.

She came early to the theatre at night, and sat, half-dressed, fatigued and nervous, in her dressing-room.

Crash! — the first *coup d'archet* announced the overture, and roused her energy, as if Ithuriel's spear had pricked her. She came down, dressed, to listen at one of the upper entrances, to fill herself with the musical theme, before taking her part in it, and also to gauge the audience and the singers.

The man "Faust" was a German; but the musical part "Faust" seems better suited to an Italian or a Frenchman. Indeed, some say that, as a rule, the German genius excels in creation, and the Italian in representation or interpretation. For my part, I am unable to judge nations in the lump, as some fine fellows do, because nations are composed of very different individuals, and I know only one to the million; but I do take on me to say that the individual Herr who executed Dr. Faustus at Homburg that night, had everything to learn, except what he had to unlearn. His person was obese; his delivery of the words was mouthing, chewing, and gurgling; and he uttered the notes in tune, but without point, pathos, or passion; a steady lay-clerk from York or Durham Cathedral would have done a little better, because he would have been no colder at heart, and more exact in time, and would have sung clean, whereas this gentleman set his windpipe trembling, all through the

business, as if palsy was passion. By what system of leverage such a man came to be hoisted on to such a pinnacle of song as "Faust," puzzled our English friends in front as much as it did the Anglo-Danish artist at the wing; for English girls know what is what in opera.

The "Marguerite" had a voice of sufficient compass, and rather sweet, though thin. The part demands a better *actress* than Patti, and this Fräulein was not half as good. She put on the painful grin of a prize-fighter who has received a staggerer, and grinned all through the part, though there is little in it to grin at.

She also suffered by having to play to a "Faust" milked of his poetry, and self-smitten with a "tremolo," which, as I said before, is the voice of palsy, and is not, nor ever was, nor ever will be, the voice of passion. Bless your heart! passion is a manly thing, a womanly thing, a grand thing; not a feeble, quavering, palsied, anile, senile thing. Learn that, ye trembling, quavering idiots of song!

"They let me down," whispered Ina Klosking to her faithful Ashmead. "I feel all out of tune. I shall never be able. And the audience so cold. It will be like singing in a sepulchre."

"What would you think of them if they applauded?" said Ashmead.

"I should say they were good, charitable souls, and the very audience I shall want in five minutes."

"No, no," said Ashmead; "all you want is a discriminating audience; and this is one. Remember, they have all seen Patti in 'Marguerite.' Is it likely they would applaud this tin stick?"

Ina turned the conversation with feminine quickness: "Mr. Ashmead, have you kept your promise? My name is not in the programme?"

"It is not; and a great mistake, too."

"I have not been announced by name in any way?"

"No; but, of course, I have nursed you a bit."

"Nursed me? What is that? Oh, what have you been doing? No *charlatanerie*, I hope."

"Nothing of the kind," said Ashmead, stoutly; "only the regular business."

"And pray what is the regular business?" inquired Ina, distrustfully.

"Why, of course, I sent on the manager to say that Mademoiselle Schwab was taken seriously ill; that we had been fearing we must break faith with the public, for the first time. But that a cantatrice, who had left the stage, appreciated our difficulty, and had, with rare kindness, come to our aid for this one night; we felt sure a Humbug audience — what am I saying? — a Homburg audience would appreciate this, and make due allowance for a performance undertaken in such a spirit, and with imperfect rehearsals, etc. — in short, the usual patter; and the usual effect, great applause. Indeed, the only applause that I have heard in this theatre to-night. Ashmead ahead of Gounod, so far."

Ina Klosking put both hands before her face, and gave a little moan. She had really a soul above these artifices. "So then," said she, "if they do receive me, it will be out of charity."

"No, no; but on your first night you must have two strings to your bow."

"But I have only one. These cajoling speeches are a waste of breath. A singer can sing, or she can *not* sing, and they find out which it is as soon as she opens her mouth."

"Well, then, you open your mouth — that is just what half the singers can't do — and they will soon find out you can sing."

"I hope they may. I do not know. I am discouraged;

I'm terrified. I think it is stage-fright;" and she began to tremble visibly, for the time drew near.

Ashmead ran off, and brought her some brandy-and-water. She put up her hand against it with royal scorn. "No, sir! — if the theatre — and the lights — and the people — the mind of Goethe — and the music of Gounod, can't excite me without *that*, put me at the counter of a *café*, for I have no business here."

The power, without violence, and the grandeur, with which she said this, would have brought down the house had she spoken it in a play without a note of music; and Ashmead drew back respectfully, but chuckled internally at the idea of this Minerva giving change in a *café*.

And now her cue was coming. She ordered everybody out of the entrance not very ceremoniously, and drew well back. Then, at her cue, she made a stately rush, and so, being in full swing before she cleared the wing, she swept into the centre of the stage with great rapidity and resolution. No trace either of her sorrowful heart or her quaking limbs was visible from the front.

There was a little applause, all due to Ashmead's preliminary apology; but there was no real reception; for Germany is large and musical, and she was not immediately recognized at Homburg. But there was that indescribable flutter which marks a good impression and keen expectation suddenly aroused. She was beautiful on the stage, for one thing: her figure rather tall and stately, and her face full of power; and then the very way she came on showed the step and carriage of an artist at home upon the boards.

She cast a rapid glance round the house, observed its size, and felt her way. She sang her first song evenly, but not tamely, yet with restrained power; but the tones were so full and flexible, the expression so easy, yet exact, that the judges saw there was no effort, and sus-

pected something big might be yet in store to-night. At the end of her song she did let out for a moment, and, at this well-timed foretaste of her power, there was applause, but nothing wonderful.

She was quite content, however. She met Ashmead, as she came off, and said, "All is well, my friend, so far. They are sitting in judgment on me, like sensible people, and not in a hurry. I rather like that."

"Your own fault," said Joseph. "You should have been announced. Prejudice is a surer card than judgment. The public is an ass."

"It must come to the same thing in the end," said the Klosking firmly. "One can sing, or one cannot."

Her next song was encored, and she came off flushed with art and gratified pride. "I have no fears now," said she, to her Achates, firmly. "I have my barometer; a young lady in the stalls. Oh, such a beautiful creature, with black hair and eyes! She applauds me fearlessly. Her glorious eyes speak to mine, and inspire me. She is *happy*, she is. I drink sunbeams at her. I shall act and sing 'Le Parlate d'Amor' for her — and you will see."

Between the acts, who should come in but Ned Severne, and glided into the vacant stall by Zoe's side.

She quivered at his coming near her; he saw it, and felt a thrill of pleasure himself.

"How is 'S. T.'?" said she kindly.

"S. T.?" said he forgetting.

"Why, your sick friend, to be sure."

"Oh, not half so bad as he thought. I was a fool to lose an hour of you for *him*. He was hipped; had lost all his money at *rouge et noir*. So I lent him fifty pounds, and that did him more good than the doctor. You forgive me?"

"Forgive you? I approve. Are you going back to him?" said she demurely.

"No, thank you, I have made sacrifices enough."

And so indeed he had, having got cleaned out of three hundred pounds, through preferring gambling to beauty.

"Singers good?" he inquired.

"Wretched; all but one — and she is divine."

"Indeed! Who is she?"

"I don't know. A gentleman in black came out" —

"Mephistopheles?"

"No; — how dare you? — and said a singer that had retired would perform the part of 'Siebel,' to oblige; and she has obliged me for one. She is, oh, so superior to the others! Such a heavenly contralto; and her upper notes, honey dropping from the comb. And then she is so modest, so dignified, *and* so beautiful. She is fair as a lily; and such a queen-like brow, and deep, deep, gray eyes, full of sadness and soul. I'm afraid she is not happy. Once or twice she fixed them on me, and they magnetized me, and drew me to her. So I magnetized her in return. I should know her anywhere fifty years hence. Now, if I was a man, I should love that woman, and make her love me."

"Then I am very glad you are not a man," said Severne, tenderly.

"So am I," whispered Zoe, and blushed.

The curtain rose.

"Listen, now, Mr. Chatterbox," said Zoe.

Ned Severne composed himself to listen; but Fräulein Graas had not sung many bars before he revolted. "Listen to what?" said he, "and look at what? The only 'Marguerite' in the place is by my side."

Zoe colored with pleasure; but her good sense was not to be blinded. "The only good black Mephistophe-*less* you mean," said she. "To be 'Marguerite,' one must be great, and sweet, and tender; yes, and far more lovely

than ever woman was. That lady is a better color for the part than I am; but neither she nor I shall ever be 'Marguerite.'"

He murmured in her ear, "You are 'Marguerite,' for you could fire a man's heart so that he would sell his soul to gain you."

It was the accent of passion, and the sensitive girl quivered. Yet she defended herself — in words: "Hush!" said she; "that is wicked — out of an opera. Fanny would laugh at you, if she heard."

Here were two reasons for not making such hot love in the stalls of an opera. Which of the two weighed most with the fair reasoner, shall be left to her own sex.

The brief scene ended with the declaration of the evil spirit that "Marguerite" is lost.

"There," said Zoe, naïvely, "that is over, thank goodness: now you will hear *my* singer."

"Siebel" and "Marta" came on from opposite sides of the stage. "See!" said Zoe, "isn't she lovely?" and she turned her beaming face full on Severne, to share her pleasure with him. To her amazement the man seemed transformed; a dark cloud had come over his sunny countenance. He sat, pale, and seemed to stare at the tall, majestic, dreamy singer, who stood immovable, dressed like a velvet youth, yet looking like no earthly boy, but a draped statue of Mercury,

"New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."

The blood left his lips, and Zoe thought he was faint; but the next moment he put his handkerchief hastily to his nose, and wriggled his way out, with a rush and a crawl strangely combined, at the very moment when the singer delivered her first commanding note of recitative.

Everybody about looked surprised and disgusted at so

ill-timed an exit; but Zoe, who had seen his white face, was seriously alarmed, and made a movement to rise too, and watch or even follow him: but, when he got to the side, he looked back to her, and made her a signal that his nose was bleeding, but it was of no great consequence. He even pointed with his finger out and then back again, indicating he should not be long gone.

This reassured her greatly; for she had always been told a little bleeding of that sort was good for hot-headed young people.

Then the singer took complete hold of her. The composer, to balance the delightful part of "Marguerite," has given "Siebel" a melody with which wonders can be done; and the Klosking had made a considerable reserve of her powers for this crowning effort. After a recitative that rivalled the silver trumpet, she flung herself with immediate and electrifying ardor into the melody; the orchestra, taken by surprise, fought feebly for the old ripple, but the Klosking, resolute by nature, was now mighty as Neptune, and would have her big waves. The momentary struggle, in which she was loyally seconded by the conductor, evoked her grand powers. Catgut had to yield to brains, and the whole orchestra, composed, after all, of good musicians, soon caught the divine afflatus, and the little theatre seemed on fire with music: the air, sung with a large rhythm, swelled and rose, and thrilled every breast with amazement and delight; the house hung breathless; by and by there were pale cheeks, panting bosoms, and wet eyes, the true, rare triumphs of the sovereigns of song; and, when the last note had pealed and ceased to vibrate, the pent-up feelings broke forth in a roar of applause, which shook the dome, followed by a clapping of hands like a salvo, that never stopped till Ina Klosking, who had retired, came forward again.

She courtesied with admirable dignity, modesty, and respectful gravity, and the applause thundered, and people rose at her in clusters about the house, and waved their hats and handkerchiefs at her, and a little Italian recognized her, and cried out as loud as he could, "Vivat la Klosking, vivat!" and she heard that, and it gave her a thrill; and Zoe Vizard, being out of England, and therefore brave as a lioness, stood boldly up at her full height, and taking her bouquet in the right hand, carried it swiftly to her left ear, and so flung it, with a free back-handed sweep more oriental than English, into the air, and it lighted by the singer; and she saw the noble motion, and the bouquet fly, and, when she made her last courtesy at the wing, she fixed her eyes on Zoe, and then put her hand to her heart with a most touching gesture, that said, "Most of all I value your bouquet and your praise."

Then the house buzzed, and ranks were levelled; little people spoke to big people, and big to little, in mutual congratulation; for at such rare moments (except in Anglo-Saxony) instinct seems to tell men that true art is a sunshine of the soul, and blesses the rich and the poor alike.

One person was affected in another way. Harrington Vizard sat rapt in attention, and never took his eyes off her, yet said not a word.

Several Russian and Prussian grandees sought an introduction to the new singer; but she pleaded fatigue. The manager entreated her to sup with him, and meet the Grand Duke of Hesse. She said she had a prior engagement.

She went quietly home, and supped with her faithful Ashmead, and very heartily too; for nature was exhausted, and agitation had quite spoiled her dinner.

Joseph Ashmead, in the pride of his heart, proposed

a bottle of champagne. The Queen of Song, with triumph flushed, looked rather blue at that. "My friend," said she, in a meek deprecating way, "we are working people: is not bordeaux good enough for *us?*"

"Yes; but it is not good enough for the occasion," said Joseph, a little testily. "Well, never mind;" and he muttered to himself, "that is the worst of good women; they are so terribly stingy."

The Queen of Song, with triumph flushed, did not catch these words, but only a little growling. However, as supper proceeded, she became uneasy. So she rang the bell and ordered *a pint:* of this she drank one spoonful. The remainder, co-operating with triumph and claret, kept Ashmead in a great flow of spirits. He traced her a brilliant career. To be photographed to-morrow morning as "Siebel," and in plain dress. Paragraphs in *Era, Figaro, Galignani, Indépendance Belge,* and the leading dailies. Large woodcuts before leaving Homburg for Paris, London, Vienna, Petersburg, and New York.

"I'm in your hands," said she, and smiled languidly, to please him.

But by-and-by he looked at her, and found she was taking a little cry all to herself.

"Dear me!" said he; "what is the matter?"

"My friend, forgive me. *He* was not there to share my triumph."

CHAPTER IV.

As the opera drew to an end, Zoe began to look round more and more for Severne; but he did not come, and Lord Uxmoor offered his arm earnestly. She took it; but hung back a moment on his very arm, to tell Harrington Mr. Severne had been taken ill.

At the railway station the truant emerged suddenly, just as the train was leaving; but Lord Uxmoor had secured three seats, and the defaulter had to go with Harrington. On reaching the hotel, the ladies took their bed-candles; but Uxmoor found time to propose an excursion next day, Sunday, to a lovely little lake — open carriage, four horses. The young ladies accepted, but Mr. Severne declined; he thanked Lord Uxmoor politely, but he had arrears of correspondence.

Zoe cast a mortified and rather a haughty glance on him: and Fanny shrugged her shoulders incredulously.

These two ladies brushed hair together in Zoe's room. That is a soothing operation, my masters, and famous for stimulating females to friendly gossip; but this time there was, for once, a guarded reserve. Zoe was irritated, puzzled, mortified, and even grieved, by Severne's conduct. Fanny was gnawed by jealousy, and out of temper. She had forgiven Zoe Ned Severne. But that young lady was insatiable; Lord Uxmoor, too, had fallen openly in love with her; openly to a female eye: so then a blonde had no chance, with a dark girl by: thus reasoned she, and it was intolerable.

It was some time before either spoke an atom of what

was uppermost in her mind. They each doled out a hundred sentences that missed the mind and mingled readily with the atmosphere, being in fact mere preliminary and idle air: so two deer, in duel, go about and about, and even affect to look another way, till they are ripe for collision. There be writers would give the reader all the preliminary puffs of articulated wind, and everybody would say, "How clever! That is just the way girls really talk." But I leave the glory of photographing nullities to the geniuses of the age, and run to the first words which could, without impiety, be called dialogue.

"Don't you think his conduct a little mysterious?" said Zoe, *mal-à-propos* of anything that had been said hitherto.

"Well, yes; rather," said Fanny, with marked carelessness.

"First, a sick friend; then a bleeding at the nose; and now he won't drive to the lake with us: arrears of correspondence! Pooh!"

Now Fanny's suspicions were deeper than Zoe's; she had observed Severne keenly: but it was not her cue to speak; she yawned, and said, "What *does* it matter?"

"Don't be unkind. It matters to *me*."

"Not it. You have another ready."

"What other? There is no one that I — Fanny."

"Oh, nonsense! The man is evidently smitten, and you keep encouraging him."

"No, I don't; I am barely civil. And don't be ill-natured. What *can* I do?"

"Why, be content with one at a time."

"It is very rude to talk so. Besides, I haven't got one, much less two. I begin to doubt *him;* and, Lord Uxmoor! you know I cannot possibly care for him — an acquaintance of yesterday."

"But you know all about him; that he is an excellent *parti*," said Fanny, with a provoking sneer.

This was not to be borne.

"Oh," said Zoe, "I see! you want him for yourself. It is *you* that are not content with one. You forget how poor Harrington would miss your attentions. He would *begin* to appreciate them — when he had lost them."

This stung, and Fanny turned white and red by turns. "I deserve this," said she, "for wasting advice on a coquette."

"That is not true; I'm no coquette: and here I am, asking your advice, and you only snub me. You are a jealous, cross, unreasonable thing."

"Well, I'm not a hypocrite."

"I never was called so before," said Zoe, nobly and gently.

"Then you were not found out, that is all. You look so simple and ingenuous, and blush if a man says half a word to you; and all the time you are a greater flirt than I am."

"Oh, Fanny!" screamed Zoe, with horror.

It seems a repartee may be conveyed in a scream; for Fanny now lost her temper altogether. "Your conduct with these two men is abominable," said she. "I won't speak to you more."

"I beg you will *not*, in your present temper," said Zoe, with unaffected dignity, and rising like a Greek column.

Fanny flounced out of the room.

Zoe sat down and sighed, and her glorious eyes were dimmed. Mystery — doubt — and now a quarrel. What a day! At her age, a little cloud seems to darken the whole sky.

Next morning the little party met at breakfast. Lord Uxmoor, anticipating a delightful day, was in high spirits, and he and Fanny kept up the ball. She had

resolved, in the silent watches of the night, to contest him with Zoe, and make every possible use of Severne, in the conflict.

Zoe was silent and *distraite*, and did not even try to compete with her sparkling rival. But Lord Uxmoor's eyes often wandered from his sprightly companion to Zoe, and it was plain he longed for a word from her mouth.

Fanny observed, bit her lip, and tacked internally, "'bout ship," as the sailors say. Her game now, conceived in a moment, and at once put in execution, was to encourage Uxmoor's attentions to Zoe. She began by openly courting Mr. Severne, to make Zoe talk to Uxmoor, and also make him think that Severne and she were the lovers.

Her intentions were to utilize the coming excursion; she would attach herself to Harrington, and so drive Zoe and Uxmoor together; and then Lord Uxmoor, at his present rate of amorous advance, would probably lead Zoe to a detached rock, and make her a serious declaration. This good, artful girl felt sure such a declaration, made a few months hence in Barfordshire, would be accepted, and herself left in the cold. Therefore she resolved it should be made prematurely, and in Germany, with Severne at hand, and so in all probability come to nothing. She even glimpsed a vista of consequences, and in that little avenue discerned the figure of Fanny Dover playing the part of consoler, friend, and ultimately spouse, to a wealthy noble.

CHAPTER V.

The letters were brought in: one was to Vizard, from Herries, announcing a remittance; one to Lord Uxmoor. On reading it, he was surprised into an exclamation, and his face expressed great concern.

"Oh!" said Zoe — "Harrington!"

Harrington's attention being thus drawn, he said, "No bad news, I hope?"

"Yes," said Uxmoor, in a low voice, "very bad. My oldest, truest, dearest friend has been seized with small-pox, and his life in danger. He has asked for me, poor fellow. This is from his sister. I must start by the twelve o'clock train."

"Small-pox! why, it is contagious!" cried Fanny; "and so disfiguring!"

"I can't help that," said the honest fellow; and instantly rang the bell for his servant, and gave the requisite orders.

Zoe, whose eye had never left him all the time, said, softly, "It is brave and good of you. We poor, emotional, cowardly girls should sit down and cry."

"*You* would not, Miss Vizard," said he, firmly, looking full at her. "If you think you would, you don't know yourself."

Zoe colored high, and was silent.

Then Lord Uxmoor showed the true English gentleman. "I do hope," said he, earnestly, though in a somewhat broken voice, "that you will not let this spoil the pleasure we had planned together. Harrington will be my deputy."

"Well, I don't know," said Harrington, sympathizingly. Mr. Severne remarked, "Such an occurrence puts pleasure out of one's head." This he said, with his eyes on his plate, like one repeating a lesson. "Vizard, I entreat you," said Uxmoor, almost vexed. "It will only make me more unhappy if you don't."

"We will go," cried Zoe, earnestly; "we promise to go. What does it matter? We shall think of you and your poor friend wherever we are. And I shall pray for him. But, ah! I know how little prayers avail to avert these cruel bereavements." She was young, but old enough to have prayed hard for her sick mother's life, and, like the rest of us, prayed in vain. At this remembrance the tears ran undisguised down her cheeks.

The open sympathy of one so young and beautiful, and withal rather reserved, made Lord Uxmoor gulp; and, not to break down before them all, he blurted out that he must go and pack: with this he hurried away.

He was unhappy. Besides the calamity he dreaded, it was grievous to be torn away from a woman he loved at first sight, and just when she had come out so worthy of his love: she was a high-minded creature; she had been silent and reserved so long as the conversation was trivial; but, when trouble came, she was the one to speak to him bravely and kindly. Well, what must be, must. All this ran through his mind, and made him sigh; but it never occurred to him to shirk — to telegraph instead of going — nor yet to value himself on his self-denial.

They did not see him again till he was on the point of going, and then he took leave of them all, Zoe last. When he came to her, he ignored the others, except that he lowered his voice in speaking to her. "God bless you for your kindness, Miss Vizard. It is a little hard upon a fellow to have to run away from such an acquaint-

ance, just when I have been so fortunate as to make it."

"Oh, Lord Uxmoor," said Zoe, innocently, "never mind that. Why, we live in the same county, and we are on the way home. All I think of is your poor friend; and do please telegraph — to Harrington."

He promised he would, and went away disappointed somehow at her last words.

When he was gone, Severne went out on the balcony to smoke, and Harrington held a council with the young ladies. "Well now," said he, "about this trip to the lake."

"I shall not go, for one," said Zoe, resolutely.

"La!" said Fanny, looking carefully away from her to Harrington; "and *she* was the one that insisted."

Zoe ignored the speaker, and set her face stiffly towards Harrington. "She only *said* that to *him*."

Fanny. — "But unfortunately ears are not confined to the noble."

Zoe. — "Nor tongues to the discreet."

Both these remarks were addressed pointedly to Harrington.

"Hullo!" said he, looking from one flaming girl to the other; "am I to be a shuttlecock? and your discreet tongues the battledoors? What is up?"

"We don't speak," said the frank Zoe; "that is up."

"Why, what is the row?"

"No matter" (stiffly).

"No great matter, I'll be bound. 'Toll, toll the bell.' Here goes one more immortal friendship — quenched in eternal silence."

Both ladies bridled. Neither spoke.

"And dead silence, as ladies understand it, consists in speaking *at* one another instead of *to*."

No reply.

"That is well-bred taciturnity."

No answer.

"The dignified reserve that distinguishes an estrangement from a squabble."

No reply.

"Well, I admire permanent sentiments, good or bad; constant resolves, etc. Your friendship has not proved immortal; so now let us see how long you can hold spite — SIEVES!" Then he affected to start. "What is this? I spy a rational creature out on yonder balcony. I hasten to join him. 'Birds of a feather,' you know;" and with that he went out to his favorite, and never looked behind him.

The young ladies, indignant at the contempt the big man had presumed to cast upon the constant soul of woman, turned two red faces and four sparkling eyes to each other, with the instinctive sympathy of the jointly injured; but, remembering in time, turned sharply round again, and presented napes, and so sat sullen.

By and by a chilling thought fell upon them both at the same moment of time. The men were good friends as usual, safe, by sex, from tiffs, and could do without them; and a dull day impended over the hostile fair.

Thereupon the ingenious Fanny resolved to make a splash of some sort, and disturb stagnation. She suddenly cried out, "La! and the man is gone away: so what is the use?" This remark she was careful to level at bare space.

Zoe, addressing the same person — space, to wit — inquired of him if anybody in his parts knew to whom this young lady was addressing herself.

"To a girl that is too sensible not to see the folly of quarrelling about a man — *when he is gone*," said Fanny.

"If it is me you mean," said Zoe, stiffly, "*really* I am *surprised*. You forget we are at daggers drawn."

"No, I don't, dear; and parted forever."

Zoe smiled at that against her will.

"Zoe!" (penitentially.)

"Frances!" (archly.)

"Come, cuddle me quick!"

Zoe was all round her neck in a moment, like a lace scarf, and there was violent kissing, with a tear or two.

Then they put an arm around each other's waist, and went all about the premises intertwined like snakes; and Zoe gave Fanny her cameo brooch, the one with the pearls round it.

The person to whom Vizard fled from the tongue of beauty was a delightful talker: he read two or three newspapers every day, and recollected the best things. Now it is not everybody can remember a thousand disconnected facts and recall them *apropos*. He was various, fluent, and above all superficial; and such are your best conversers; they have something good and strictly ephemeral to say on everything, and don't know enough of anything to impale their hearers. In my youth there talked in Pall Mall a gentleman known as "Conversation Sharp." He eclipsed everybody. Even Macaulay paled. Sharp talked all the blessed afternoon, and grave men listened enchanted: and of all he said, nothing stuck. Where be now your Sharpiana? The learned may be compared to mines; these desultory charmers are more like the ornamental cottage near Staines, forty or fifty rooms, and the whole structure one story high. The mine teems with solid wealth; but you must grope and trouble to come at it: it is easier and pleasanter to run about the cottage with a lot of rooms all on the ground-floor.

The mind and body both get into habits — sometimes apart, sometimes in conjunction. Nowadays we seat the

body to work the intellect, even in its lower form of mechanical labor: it is your clod that toddles about laboring. The Peripatetics did not endure: their method was not suited to man's microcosm. Bodily movements fritter mental attention. We *sit* at the feet of Gamaliel, or, as some call him, Tyndall; and we sit to Bacon and Adam Smith. But, when we are standing or walking, we love to take brains easy. If this delightful chatter-box had been taken down shorthand and printed, and Vizard had been set down to Severni opuscula, ten volumes, — and, mind you, Severne had talked all ten by this time — the Barfordshire squire and old Oxonian would have cried out for "more matter with less words," and perhaps have even fled for relief to some shorter treatise, Bacon's 'Essays,' Browne's 'Religio Medici,' or Buckle's 'Civilization.' But lounging in a balcony, and lazily breathing a cloud, he could have listened all day to his desultory, delightful friend, overflowing with little questions, little answers, little queries, little epigrams, little maxims, *à la Rochefoucauld*, little histories, little anecdotes, little gossip, and little snap shots at every feather flying.

> Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas
> Gaudia, discursus, nostri farrago Severni.

But, alas! after an hour of touch-and-go, of superficiality and soft delight, the desultory charmer fell on a subject he had studied. So then he bored his companion for the first time in all the tour.

But, to tell the honest truth, Mr. Severne had hitherto been pleasing his friend with a cold-blooded purpose. His preliminary gossip, that made the time fly so agreeably, was intended to oil the way; to lubricate the passage of a premeditated pill. As soon as he had got Vizard into perfect good-humor, he said *apropos* of noth-

ing that had passed, "By the by, old fellow, that five hundred pounds you promised to lend me!"

Vizard was startled by this sudden turn of a conversation hitherto agreeable.

"Why, you have had three hundred and lost it," said he. "Now take my advice, and don't lose any more."

"I don't mean to. But I am determined to win back the three hundred, and a great deal more, before I leave this. I have discovered a system, an infallible one."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Harrington, gravely. "That is the second step on the road to ruin; the gambler with a system is the confirmed maniac."

"What! because *other* systems have been tried, and proved to be false? Mine is untried, and it is mere prejudice to condemn it unheard."

"Propound it then," said Vizard. "Only please observe the bank has got its system — you forget that; and the bank's system is to take a positive advantage, which must win in the long-run; therefore all counter systems must lose in the long-run."

"But the bank is tied to a long-run, the individual player is not."

This reply checked Vizard for a moment, and the other followed up his advantage. "Now, Vizard, be reasonable. What would the trifling advantage the bank derives from an incident, which occurs only once in twenty-eight deals, avail against a player who could foresee at any given deal whether the card that was going to come up the nearest thirty, would be on the red or black?"

"No avail at all. God Almighty could break the bank every afternoon. *Après?* as we say in France. Do you pretend to omniscience?"

"Not exactly."

"Well, but prescience of isolated events, preceded by no *indicia*, belongs only to omniscience. Did they not teach you that much at Oxford?"

"They taught me very little at Oxford."

"Fault of the place, eh? You taught *them* something, though, and the present conversation reminds me of it. In your second term, when every other man is still quizzed and kept down as a freshman, you were already a leader — a chief of misrule; you founded a whist-club in Trinity, the primmest college of all. The dons rooted you out in college, but you did not succumb; you fulfilled the saying of Sydney Smith, that 'Cribbage should be played in caverns, and sixpenny whist in the howling wilderness.' Ha! ha! how well I remember riding across Bullington Green one fine afternoon, and finding four Oxford hacks haltered in a row, and the four undergraduates who had hired them on long tick sitting cross-legged under the hedge, like Turks or tailors, round a rude table with the legs sawed down to stumps! You had two packs, and a portable inkstand, and were so hard at it that I put my mare's nose right over the quartet before you saw either her or me. That hedge was like a drift of odoriferous snow with the hawthorn-bloom, and primroses sparkled on its bank like topazes. The birds chirruped, the sky smiled, the sun burnt perfumes; and there sat my lord and his fellow-maniacs, snick-snack — pit-pat — cutting, dealing, playing, revoking, scoring, and exchanging I O U's not worth the paper."

"All true, but the revoking," said Severne, merrily. "Monster! by the memory of those youthful days, I demand a fair hearing." Then, gravely, "Hang it all, Vizard! I am not a fellow that is always intruding his affairs and his theories upon other men."

"No, no, no," said Vizard, hastily, and half apologetically; "go on."

"Well, then, of course I don't pretend to foreknowledge — but I do to experience; and you know experience teaches the wise."

"Not to fling five hundred after three. There — I beg pardon. Proceed, instructor of youth."

"Do listen, then; experience teaches us that luck has its laws; and I build my system on one of them. If two opposite accidents are sure to happen equally often in a total of fifty times, people, who have not observed, expect them to happen turn about, and bet accordingly. But they don't happen turn about; they make short runs, and sometimes long ones. They positively avoid alternation. Have you not observed this at *trente et quarante?*"

"No."

"Then you have not watched the cards?"

"Not much. The faces of the gamblers were always my study. *They* are instructive."

"Well, then, I'll give you an example outside, for the principle runs through all equal chances; take the University boat-race; you have kept your eye on that?"

"Rather. Never missed one yet. Come all the way from Barfordshire to see it."

"Well, there's an example."

"Of chance? No, thank you. That goes by strength, skill, wind, endurance, chaste living, self-denial, and judicious training. Every winning boat is manned by virtues." His eye flashed, and he was as earnest all in a moment as he had been listless. A Continental cynic had dubbed this insular cynic mad.

The professor of chances smiled superior. "Those things decide each individual race, and the best men win, because it happens to be the only race that is never sold. But go farther back, and you find it is chance. It is pure chance that sends the best men up to Cambridge two or three years running, and then to Oxford. With this key, take the facts my system rests on. There are two. The first is that in thirty and odd races and

matches the University luck has come out equal on the river and at Lord's; the second is, the luck has seldom alternated. I don't say never. But look at the list of events; it is published every March. You may see there the great truth that even chances shun direct alternation. In this, properly worked, lies a fortune at Homburg, where the play is square. Red gains once; you back red next time and stop. You are on black, and win; you double. This is the game if you have only a few pounds. But with five hundred pounds you can double more courageously, and work the short run hard; and that is how losses are averted, and gains secured. Once at Wiesbaden I caught a *croupier* out on a holiday. It was Good Friday, you know. I gave him a stunning dinner. He was close as wax, at first, — that might be the salt fish: but after the *rognons à la brochette*, and a bottle of champagne, he let out. I remember one thing he said. 'Monsieur, ce que fait la fortune de la banque ce n'est pas le petit avantage qu'elle tire du refait — quoique cela y est pour quelque chose, — c'est la témérité de ceux qui perdent, et la timidité de ceux qui gagnent.'"

"And," says Vizard, "there is a French proverb founded on *experience:* —

'C'est encore rouge qui perd,
Et encore noir,
Mais toujours Blanc qui gagne.'"

Severne, for the first time, looked angry and mortified; he turned his back, and was silent. Vizard looked at him uneasily, hesitated a moment, then flung the remainder of his cigar away, and seemed to rouse himself body and soul. He squared his shoulders, as if he was going to box the demon of play for his friend, and he let out good sense right and left, and, indeed, was almost betrayed into eloquence. "What!" he cried;

"you, who are so bright, and keen, and knowing in everything else, are you really so blinded by egotism and credulity as to believe that you can invent any method of betting at *rouge et noir* that has not been tried before you were born? Do you remember the first word in La Bruyère's famous work?"

"No," said Ned, sulkily. "Read nothing but newspapers."

"Good lad. Saves a deal of trouble. Well, he begins: 'Tout est dit;' 'Everything has been said;' and I say that, in your business, 'Tout est fait:' 'Everything has been done.' Every move has been tried before you existed, and the result of all is that to bet against the bank, wildly or systematically, is to gamble against a rock. *Si monumenta quæris, circumspice.* Use your eyes, man. Look at the Kursaal, its luxuries, its gardens, its gilding, its attractions, all of them cheap, except the one that pays for all: all these delights, and the rents, and the *croupiers*, and the servants, and the income and liveries of an unprincipled prince, who would otherwise be a poor but honest gentleman with one *bonne* instead of thirty blazing lackeys, all come from the gains of the bank, which are the losses of the players, especially of those that have got a system."

Severne shot in, "A bank was broken last week."

"Was it? Then all it lost has returned to it, or will return to it to-night; for gamblers know no day of rest."

"Oh, yes, they do. It is shut on Good Friday."

"You surprise me. Only three hundred and sixty-four days in the year! Brainless avarice is more reasonable than I thought. Severne, yours is a very serious case. You have reduced your income, that is clear; for an English gentleman does not stay years and years abroad, unless he has outrun the constable; and I feel sure gambling has done it. You had the fever from a boy.

Bullington Green! 'As the twig's bent, the tree's inclined.' Come, come, make a stand. We are friends. Let us help one another against our besetting foibles. Let us practise antique wisdom. Let us 'know ourselves,' and leave Homburg to-morrow, instead of Tuesday."

Severne looked sullen, but said nothing; then Vizard gave him, too hastily, credit for some of that sterling friendship, bordering on love, which warmed his own faithful breast. Under this delusion he made an extraordinary effort; he used an argument which, with himself, would have been irresistible. "Look here," said he, "I'll — won't you have a cigar? — there; now I'll tell you something — I have a mania as bad as yours; only mine is intermittent, thank heaven. I'm told a million women are as good as a million men, perhaps better. It may be so. But when I, an individual, stake my heart on lovely woman, she always turns out unworthy. With me the sex *avoids alternation.* Therefore I rail on them wholesale. It is not philosophical; but I don't do it to instruct mankind — it is to soothe my spleen. Well, would you believe it, once in every three years, in spite of my experience, I am always bitten again. After my lucid interval has expired, I fall in with some woman who seems not like the rest, but an angel. Then I, though I am averse to the sex, fall an easy, an immediate, victim to the individual."

"Love at first sight."

"Not a bit of it. If she is as beautiful as an angel, with the voice of a peacock or a guinea-hen — and, luckily for me, that is a frequent arrangement — she is no more to me than the fire-shovel. If she has a sweet voice and pale eyes, I'm safe. Indeed I am safe against Juno, Venus, and Minerva, for two years and several months after the last; but when two events coincide — when my

time is up, and the lovely, melodious female comes — then I am lost. Before I have seen her and heard her five minutes, I know my fate, and I never resist it. I never can; that is a curious part of the mania. Then commences a little drama, all the acts of which are stale copies; yet each time they take me by surprise, as if they were new. In spite of past experience, I begin all confidence and trust: by and by come the subtle but well-known signs of deceit; so doubt is forced on me; and then I am all suspicion, and so darkly vigilant, that soon all is certainty; for *les fourberies des femmes* are diabolically subtle, but monotonous. They seem to vary only on the surface. One looks too gentle and sweet to give any creature pain; I cherish her like a tender plant; she deceives me for the coarsest fellow she can find. Another comes the frank and candid dodge; she is very off-handed, she shows me it is not worth her while to betray; she deceives me, like the other, and with as little discrimination. The next has a face of beaming innocence, and a limpid eye that looks like transparent candor. She gazes long and calmly in my face, as if her eye loved to dwell on me — gazes with the eye of a gazelle or a young hare — and the baby lips below outlie the hoariest male fox in the Old Jewry. But to complete the delusion, all my sweethearts and wives are romantic and poetical skin-deep, or they would not attract me; and all turn out vulgar to the core. By their lovers alone can you ever know them. By the men they can't love, and the men they do love, you find these creatures, that imitate sentiment so divinely, are hard, prosaic, vulgar little things, thinly gilt and double varnished."

"They are much better than we are; but you don't know how to take them," said Severne, with the calm superiority of success.

"No," replied Vizard dryly; "curse me if I do. Well,

I did hope I had outgrown my mania, as I have done the toothache; for this time I had passed the fatal period, the three years. It is nearly four years now since I went through the established process, — as fixed beforehand as the dyer's or the cotton-weaver's, — adored her, trusted her blindly, suspected her, watched her, detected her, left her. By the by, she was my wife, the last; but that made no difference; she was neither better nor worse than the rest, and her methods and idiotic motives of deceit identical. Well, Ned, I was mistaken. Yesterday night I met my fate once more."

"Where? in Frankfort?"

"No; at Homburg, at the opera. You must give me your word not to tell a soul."

"I pledge you my word of honor."

"Well, the lady who sang the part of 'Siebel.'"

"Siebel?" muttered Severne.

"Yes," said Vizard dejectedly.

Severne fixed his eyes on his friend with a strange expression of confusion and curiosity, as if he could not take it all in. But he said nothing, only looked very hard all the time.

Vizard burst out, "'O miseras hominum menteis, o pectora cæca!' There I sat, in the stalls, a happy man comparatively, because my heart, though full of scars, was at peace, and my reason, after periodical abdications, had resumed its throne for good; so I, weak mortal, fancied. 'Siebel' appeared; tall, easy, dignified, and walking like a wave; modest, fair, noble, great, dreamy, and, above all, divinely sad. The soul of womanhood and music poured from her honey lips; she conquered all my senses: I felt something like a bolt of ice run down my back. I ought to have jumped up, and fled the theatre. I wish I had. But I never do. I am incurable. The charm deepened; and when she had sung 'Le Parlate d'Amor,'

as no mortal ever sang and looked it, she left the stage, and carried my heart and soul away with her. What chance had I? Here shone all the beauties that adorn the body, all the virtues and graces that embellish the soul; they were wedded to poetry and ravishing music, and gave and took enchantment. I saw my paragon glide away, like a goddess, past the scenery, and I did not see her meet her lover at the next step, — a fellow with a wash-leather face, greasy locks in a sausage roll, and his hair shaved off his forehead, — and snatch a pot of porter from his hands, and drain it to the dregs, and say, 'It is all right, Harry, *that* fetched 'em.' But I know, by experience, she did: so *sauve qui peut;* dear friend and fellow-lunatic, for my sake and yours, leave Frankfort with me to-morrow."

Severne hung his head, and thought hard. Here was a new and wonderful turn. He felt all manner of strange things; a pang of jealousy for one. He felt that, on every account, it would be wise to go; and, indeed, dangerous to stay. But a mania is a mania, and so he could not. "Look here, old fellow," he said, "if the opera was on to-morrow, I would leave my three hundred behind me, and sacrifice myself to you, sooner than expose you to the fascinations of so captivating a woman as Ina Klosking."

"Ina Klosking? Is that her name? How do *you* know?"

"I — I — fancy I heard so."

"Why, she was not announced. Ina Klosking! it is a sweet name," and he sighed.

"But you are quite safe from *her* for one day," continued Severne, "so you *must* be reasonable. I will go with you Tuesday, as early as you like; but do be a good fellow, and let me have the five hundred, to try my system with to-morrow."

Vizard looked sad, and made no reply.

Severne got impatient. "Why, what is it to a rich fellow like you? If I had twelve thousand acres in a ring fence, no friend would ask me twice for such a trifling sum."

Vizard, for the first time, wore a supercilious smile at being so misunderstood, and did not deign a reply.

Severne went on mistaking his man: "I can give you bills for the money, and for the three hundred you did lend me."

Vizard did not receive this as expected. "Bills?" said he gravely. "What, do you do that sort of thing as well?"

"Why not, pray? So long as I'm the holder, not the drawer nor the acceptor. Besides, they are not accommodation bills, but good commercial paper."

"You are a merchant, then, are you?"

"Yes; in a small way. If you will allow me, I will explain."

He did so; and to save comments, yet enable the reader to appreciate his explanation, the true part of it is printed in Italics, the mendacious portion in ordinary type.

"*My estate in Huntingdonshire is not very large; and there are mortgages on it,* for the benefit of other members of my family. I was always desirous to pay off these mortgages, and took the best advice I could. *I have got an uncle;* he lives in the city. He put me on to a good thing. I bought a share in a trading vessel; she makes short trips, and turns her cargo often. She will take out paper to America, and bring back raw cotton; she will land that at Liverpool, and ship English hardware and cotton fabrics for the Mediterranean and Greece, and bring back currents from Xante, and lemons from Portugal. She goes for the nimble shilling. Well, you know ships

wear out; *and if you varnish them rotten, and insure them high, and they go to glory, Mr. Plimsoll is down on you like a hammer.* So, when she had paid my purchase-money three times over, some fellows in the city made an offer for the Rover, — that was her name. My share came to twelve hundred, and my uncle said I was to take it. *Now I always feel bound by what he decides.* They gave me four bills, for four hundred, three hundred, three hundred, and two hundred. The four hundred was paid at maturity. *The others are not due yet.* I have only to send them to London, and I can get the money back by Thursday; but you want me to start on Tuesday."

"That is enough," said Vizard wearily; "I will be your banker, and — "

"You are a good fellow," said Severne warmly.

"No, no; I am a weak fellow, and an injudicious one. But it is the old story; when a friend asks you what he thinks a favor, the right thing is to grant it at once. He doesn't want your advice; he wants the one thing he asks for. There, get me the bills, and I'll draw a check on Müller: Herries advised him by Saturday's post, so we can draw on Monday."

"All right, old man," said Severne, and went away briskly for the bills.

When he got from the balcony into the room, his steps flagged a little; it struck him that ink takes time to dry, and more time to darken.

As the Rover, with her nimble cargoes, was first cousin to the Flying Dutchman, with his crew of ghosts, so the bills received by Severne as purchase-money for his ship, necessarily partook of that ship's aërial character. Indeed they existed, as the schoolmen used to say, *in posse*, but not *in esse*. To be less pedantic and more exact, they existed as slips of blank paper with a government stamp.

To give them a mercantile character for a time, — viz., until presented for payment, — they must be drawn by an imaginary ship-owner or a visionary merchant, and indorsed by at least one shadow and a man of straw.

The man of straw sat down to inscribe self and shadows, and became a dishonest writer of fiction; for the art he now commenced appears to fall short of forgery proper, but to be still more distinct from justifiable fiction. The ingenious Mr. Defoe's certificate by an aërial justice of the peace to the truth of his ghostly narrative comes nearest to it in my poor reading.

Qualms he had, but not deep. If the bills were drawn by Imagination, accepted by Fancy, and indorsed by Impudence, what did it matter to Ned Straw, since his system would enable him to redeem them at maturity? His only real concern was to conceal their recent origin. So he wrote them with a broad-nibbed pen, that they might be the blacker, and set them to dry in the sun.

He then proceeded to a change of toilet.

While thus employed, there was a sharp tap at his door, and Vizard's voice outside. Severne started with terror, snapped up the three bills with the dexterity of a conjuror — the handle turned — he shoved them into a drawer — Vizard came in — he shut the drawer, and panted.

Vizard had followed the custom of Oxonians, amongst themselves, which is to knock, and then come in, unless forbidden.

"Come," said he, cheerfully, "those bills; I'm in a hurry to cash them now, and end the only difference we have ever had, old fellow."

The blood left Severne's cheek and lips for a moment, and he thought swiftly and hard. The blood returned along with his ready wit. "How good you are!" said he: "but no; it is Sunday."

"Sunday!" shouted Vizard. "What is that to you, a fellow who has been years abroad?"

"I can't help it," said Severne, apologetically. "I am superstitious — don't like to do business on a Sunday — I would not even shunt at the tables on a Sunday — I don't think."

"Ah, you are not quite sure of that; there *is* a limit to your superstition! Well, will you listen to a story on a Sunday?"

"Rather."

"Then, once on a time there was a Scotch farmer who had a bonny cow; and another farmer coveted her honestly. One Sunday they went home together from kirk, and there was the cow grazing. Farmer 2 stopped, eyed her, and said to Farmer 1, — 'Gin it were Monday, as it is the Sabba' day, what would ye tak' for your coo?' The other said it would be nine pounds, *if it was Monday.* And so they kept the Sabbath; and the cow changed hands, though, to the naked eye, she grazed on *in situ.* Our negotiation is just as complete. So what does it matter whether the actual exchange of bills and cash takes place to-day or to-morrow?"

"Do you really mean to say it does not matter to you?" asked Severne.

"Not one straw."

"Then, as it does not matter to you, and does to me, give me my foolish way, like a dear good fellow."

"Now, that is smart," said Vizard — "very smart;" then, with a look of parental admiration — "he gets his own way in everything. He *will* have your money — he *won't* have your money. I wonder whether he *will* consent to walk those girls out, and disburden me of their too profitable discourse."

"That I will, with pleasure."

"Well, they are at luncheon — with their bonnets on."

"I will join them in five minutes."

After luncheon, Miss Vizard, Miss Dover, and Mr. Severne started for a stroll.

Miss Maitland suggested that Vizard should accompany them.

"Couldn't think of deserting you," said he, dryly.

The young ladies giggled, because these two rarely opened their mouths to agree, — one being a professed woman-hater, and the other a man-hater.

Says Misander, in a sourish way, "Since you value my conversation so, perhaps you will be good enough not to smoke for the next ten minutes."

Misogyn consented, but sighed. That sigh went unpitied, and the lady wasted no time.

"Do you see what is going on between your sister and that young man?"

"Yes; a little flirtation."

"A great deal more than that. I caught them, in this very room, making love."

"You alarm me," said Vizard, with marked tranquillity.

"I saw him — kiss — her — hand."

"You relieve me," said Vizard, as calmly as he had been alarmed. "There is no harm in that. I've kissed the Queen's hand, and the nation did not rise upon me. However, I object to it; the superior sex should not play the spaniel. I will tell him to drop that. But, permit me to say all this is in your department, not mine."

"But what can I do against three of them, unless you support me? There you have let them go out together."

"Together with Fanny Dover, you mean?"

"Yes; and if Fanny had any designs on him, Zoe would be safe" —

"And poor Ned torn in two."

"But Fanny, I am grieved to say, seems inclined to

assist this young man with Zoe; that is, because it does not matter to her. She has other views — serious ones."

"Serious! What? A nunnery? Then I pity my lady abbess."

"Her views are plain enough to anybody but you."

"Are they? Then make me as wise as my neighbors."

"Well, then, she means to marry *you*."

"What! Oh, come! — that is too good a joke!"

"It is sober earnest. Ask Zoe — ask your friend Mr. Severne — ask the chambermaids — ask any creature with an eye in its head. Oh the blindness of you men!"

The Misogyn was struck dumb. When he recovered, it was to repine at the lot of man.

"Even my own familiar cousin — once removed — in whom I trusted! I depute you to inform her that I think her *adorable*, and that matrimony is no longer a habit of mine. Set her on to poor Severne; he is a ladies' man, and 'the more the merrier' is his creed."

"Such a girl as Fanny is not to be diverted from a purpose of that sort. Besides, she has too much sense to plunge into the Severne and — pauperism! She is bent on a rich husband, not a needy adventurer."

"Madam, in my friend's name, I thank you."

"You are very welcome, sir — it is only the truth." Then, with a swift return to her original topic: "No; I know perfectly well what Fanny Dover will do this afternoon. She sketches."

"It is too true," said Vizard dolefully: "showed me a ship in full sail, and I praised it *in my way*. I said, 'That rock is rather well done.'"

"Well, she will be seized with a desire to sketch. She will sit down apart, and say, 'Please don't watch me — it makes me nervous.' The other two will take the hint, and make love a good way off; and Zoe will go greater lengths, with another woman in sight — but only just in

sight, and slyly encouraging her — than if she was quite alone with her *mauvais sujet.*"

Vizard was pleased with the old lady.

"This is sagacious," said he, "and shows an eye for detail. I recognize in your picture the foxy sex. But, at this moment, who can foretell which way the wind will blow? You are not aware, perhaps, that Zoe and Fanny have had a quarrel. They don't speak. Now, in women, you know, vices are controlled by vices — see Pope. The conspiracy you dread will be averted by the other faults of their character, their jealousy, and their petulant tempers. Take my word for it, they are sparring at this moment; and that poor silly Severne mediating and moderating, and getting scratched on both sides for trying to be just."

At this moment the door opened, and Fanny Dover glittered on the threshold in Cambridge blue.

"There," said Vizard; "did not I tell you? They are come home."

"Only me," said Fanny, gayly.

"Where are the others?" inquired Miss Maitland, sharply.

"Not far off — only by the river-side."

"And you left those two alone!"

"Now don't be cross, aunt," cried Fanny, and limped up to her. "These new boots are so tight, I really couldn't bear them any longer. I believe I shall be lame as it is."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself. What will the people say?"

"La, aunt! it is abroad. One does what one likes — out of England."

"Here's a code of morals!" said Vizard, who must have his slap.

"Nonsense," said Miss Maitland; "she will be sure to

meet somebody. All England is on the Rhine at this time of year; and, whether or no, is it for you to expose that child to familiarity with a person nobody knows, nor his family either? You are twenty-five years old; you know the world; you have as poor an opinion of the man as I have, or you would have set your own cap at him — you know you would; and you have let out things to me when you were off your guard. Fanny Dover, you are behaving wickedly: you are a false friend to that poor girl."

Upon this, lo! the pert Fanny, hitherto so ready with her answers, began to cry bitterly; the words really pricked her conscience; and to be scolded is one thing, to be severely and solemnly reproached is another — and before a man!

The official woman-hater was melted in a moment by the saucy girl's tears. "There — there," said he, kindly; "have a little mercy. Hang it all! don't make a mountain of a mole-hill."

The official man-hater never moved a muscle. "It is no use her crying to *me:* she must give me a *proof* she is sorry. Fanny, if you are a respectable girl, and have any idea of being my heir, go you this moment and bring them home."

"Yes, aunt," said Fanny, eagerly; and went off with wonderful alacrity.

It was a very long apartment, full forty feet; and while Fanny bustled down it, Miss Maitland extended a skinny finger, like one of Macbeth's witches, and directed Vizard's eye to the receding figure so pointedly, that he put up his spy-glass the better to see the phenomenon.

As Fanny skipped out and closed the door, Miss Maitland turned to Vizard, with lean finger still pointing after Fanny, and uttered a monosyllable —

"LAME!"

Vizard burst out laughing. "*La fourbe!*" said he. "Miss Maitland, accept my compliments; you possess the key to a sex no fellow can unlock. And now I have found an interpreter, I begin to be interested in this little comedy. The first act is just over. There will be half an hour's wait till the simulatrix of infirmity comes running back with the pilgrims of the Rhine. Are they 'the pilgrims of the Rhine' or 'the pilgrims of Love'? Time will show. Play to recommence with a verbal encounter: you will be one against three; for all that, I don't envy the greater number."

"Three to one? No. Surely you will be on the right side for once."

"Well, you see, I am the audience. We can't be all *dramatis personæ*, and no spectator. During the wait, I wonder whether the audience, having nothing better to do, may be permitted to smoke a cigar."

"So long a lucid interval is irksome, of course. Well, the balcony is your smoking-room. You will see them coming; please tap at my door the moment you do."

Half an hour elapsed, an hour, and the personages required to continue the comedy did not return.

Vizard, having nothing better to do, fell to thinking of Ina Klosking, and that was not good for him. Solitude and *ennui* fed his mania, and at last it took the form of action. He rang, and ordered up his man Harris, a close, discreet personage, and directed him to go over to Homburg and bring back all the information he could about the new singer; her address in Homburg, married or single, prude or coquette. Should information be withheld, Harris was to fee the porter at the opera-house, the waiter at her hotel, and all the human commodities that knew anything about her.

Having dismissed Harris, he lighted his seventh cigar,

and said to himself, "It is all Ned Severne's fault. I wanted to leave for England to-day."

The day had been overcast for some time, and now a few big drops fell, by way of warning. Then it turned cool; then came a light drizzling rain, and, in the middle of this, Fanny Dover appeared, almost flying home.

Vizard went and tapped at Miss Maitland's door. She came out.

"Here's Miss Dover coming, but she is alone."

CHAPTER VI.

The next moment Fanny bounced into the room, and startled a little at the picture of the pair ready to receive her; she did not wait to be taken to task, but proceeded to avert censure, by volubility and self-praise. "Aunt, I went down to the river, where I left them, and looked all along it, and they were not in sight. Then I went to the cathedral, because that seemed the next likeliest place. Oh, I have had such a race!"

"Why did you come back before you had found them?"

"Aunt, it was going to rain: and it is raining now, hard."

"*She* does not mind that."

"Zoe? Oh, she has got nothing on!"

"Bless me!" cried Vizard. "Godiva *rediviva*."

"Now, Harrington, don't: of course I mean, nothing to spoil; only her purple alpaca, and that is two years old. But my blue silk, I can't afford to ruin *it*. Nobody would give me another, *I* know."

"What a heartless world," said Vizard, drily.

"It is past a jest, the whole thing," objected Miss Maitland; "and now we are together, please tell me, if you can, either of you, who *is* this man? What are his means? I know 'the Peerage,' 'the Baronetage,' and 'the Landed Gentry,' but not Severne. That is a river, not a family."

"Oh," said Vizard, "family names taken from rivers are never *parvenus*. But we can't all be down in Burke. Ned is of a good stock, the old English yeoman, the country's pride."

"Yeoman?" said the Maitland, with sovereign contempt.

Vizard resisted. "Is this the place to sneer at an English yeoman, where you see an unprincely prince living by a gambling-table? What says the old stave?—

> 'A German prince, a marquis of France,
> And a laird o' the North Countrie;
> A yeoman o' Kent, with his yearly rent,
> Would ding 'm out, all three.'"

"Then," said Misander, with a good deal of malicious intent, "you are quite sure your yeoman is not a—*pauper*—an *adventurer*"—

"Positive."

"And a *gambler*."

"No, I am not at all sure of that. But nobody is all-wise. I am not, for one. He is a fine fellow; as good as gold; as true as steel: always polite, always genial; and never speaks ill of any of you behind your backs."

Miss Maitland bridled at that. "What I have said is not out of dislike to the young man. I am warning a brother to take a little more care of his sister, that is all. However, after your sneer, I shall say no more behind Mr. Severne's back, but to his face,—that is, if we ever see his face again, or Zoe's either."

"Oh, aunt!" said Fanny, reproachfully. "It is only the rain. La, poor things, they will be wet to the skin! Just see how it is pouring!"

"That it is: and let me tell you there is nothing so dangerous as a *tête-à-tête* in the rain."

"A thunderstorm is worse, aunt," said Fanny, eagerly, "because then she is frightened to death, and clings to him—*if he is nice*."

Having galloped into this revelation, through speaking first and thinking afterwards, Fanny pulled up short the

moment the words were out, and turned red, and looked askant, under her pale lashes, at Vizard. Observing several twinkles in his eyes, she got up hastily, and said she really must go and dry her gown.

"Yes," said Miss Maitland, "come into my room, dear."

Fanny complied, with rather a rueful face, not doubting that the public "dear" was to get it rather hot in private.

Her uneasiness was not lessened when the old maid said to her, grimly, "Now sit you down there, and never mind your dress."

However, it came rather mildly, after all. "Fanny, you are not a bad girl, and you have shown you were sorry: so I am not going to be hard on you; only you must be a good girl now, and help me to undo the mischief, and then I will forgive you."

"Aunt," said Fanny, piteously, "I am older than she is, and I know I have done rather wrong, and I won't do it any more; but pray, pray don't ask me to be unkind to her to-day: it is brooch day."

Miss Maitland only stared at this obscure announcement: so Fanny had to explain that Zoe and she had tiffed, and made it up, and Zoe had given her a brooch. Hereupon she went for it, and both ladies forgot the topic they were on, and every other, to examine the brooch.

"Aunt," says Fanny, handling the brooch, and eying it, "you were a poor girl, like me, before grandpapa left you the money, and you know it is just as well to have a tiff now and then with a rich one, because, when you kiss and make it up, you always get some reconciliation thing or other."

Miss Maitland dived into the past and nodded approval.

Thus encouraged, Fanny proceeded to more modern

rules. She let Miss Maitland know it was always understood at her school that on these occasions of tiff, reconciliation, and present, the girl who received the present was to side in everything with the girl who gave it, for that one day. "That is the real reason I put on my tight boots — to earn my brooch. Isn't it a duck?"

"*Are* they tight, then?"

"Awfully. See — new on to-day."

"But you could shake off your lameness in a moment."

"La, aunt, you know one can fight *with* that sort of thing, or fight *against* it. It is like colds, and headaches, and fevers, and all that. You are in bed, too ill to see anybody you don't much care for. Night comes, and then you jump up and dress, and go to a ball, and leave your cold and your fever behind you, because the ball won't wait till you are well, and the bores will. So don't ask me to be unkind to Zoe, brooch day," said Fanny, skipping back to her first position with singular pertinacity.

"Now, Fanny," said Miss Maitland, "who wants you to be unkind to her? But you must and shall promise me not to lend her any more downright encouragement, and to watch the man well."

"I promise that faithfully," said Fanny — an adroit concession, since she had been watching him like a cat a mouse for many days.

"Then you are a good girl; and to reward you I will tell you in confidence all the strange stories I have discovered to-day."

"Oh, do, aunt!" cried Fanny; and now her eyes began to sparkle with curiosity.

Miss Maitland then bade her observe that the French casement was ajar.

"Those two were smoking, and talking secrets; and, child," said the old lady, very impressively, "if you —

want — to — know — what gentlemen really are, you must be out of sight, and listen to them, smoking. When I was a girl, the gentlemen came out in their true colors over their wine. Now they are as close as wax, drinking; and, even when they are tipsy, they keep their secrets. But once let them get by themselves and smoke, the very air is soon filled with scandalous secrets none of the ladies in the house ever dreamed of. Their real characters, their true histories, and their genuine sentiments, are locked up like that genie in the 'Arabian Nights,' and come out in smoke as he did." The old lady chuckled at her own wit, and the young one laughed to humor her. "Well, my dear, those two smoked, and revealed themselves — their real selves; and I listened and heard every word on the top of those drawers."

Fanny looked at the drawers. They were high.

"La, aunt, how ever did you get up there?"

"By a chair."

"Oh, fancy you perched up there, listening, at your age!"

"You need not keep throwing my age in my teeth. I am not so very old. Only I don't paint, and whiten, and wear false hair. There are plenty of coquettes about, ever so much older than I am. I have a great mind not to tell you; and then much you will ever know about either of these men."

"Oh, aunt, don't be cruel! I am dying to hear it."

As aunt was equally dying to tell it, she passed over the skit upon her age, though she did not forget nor forgive it; and repeated the whole conversation of Vizard and Severne with rare fidelity; but, as I abhor what the evangelist calls "battology," and Shakespeare "damnable iteration," I must draw upon the intelligence of the reader (if any), and he must be pleased to imagine

the whole dialogue of those two unguarded smokers, repeated to Fanny, and interrupted, commented on at every salient point, scrutinized, sifted, dissected, and taken to pieces by two keen women, sharp by nature, and sharper now by collision of their heads. No candor, no tolerance, no allowance for human weakness, blunted the scalpel in their dexterous hands.

Oh gossip! delight of ordinary souls, and more delightful still when you furnish food for detraction!

To Fanny, in particular, it was exciting, ravishing; and the time flew by so unheeded, that presently there came a sharp knock, and an impatient voice cried, "Chatter! — Chatter! — Chatter! — how long are we to be kept waiting for dinner, all of us?"

CHAPTER VII.

At the very commencement of the confabulation, so barbarously interrupted before it had lasted two hours and a half, the Misogyn rang the bell, and asked for Rosa, Zoe's maid.

She came, and he ordered her to have up a basket of wood, and light a roaring fire in her mistress's room, and put out garments to air. He also inquired the number of Zoe's bedroom. The girl said it was "No. 74."

The Misogyn waited half an hour, and then visited "No. 74." He found the fire burnt down to one log, and some things airing at the fire, as domestics air their employers' things, but not their own, you may be sure. There was a chemise carefully folded into the smallest possible compass, and doubled over a horse at a good distance from the cold stove. There were other garments and supplementaries, all treated in the same way.

The Misogyn looked, and remarked as follows: "Idiots! — at everything, but taking in the men."

Having relieved his spleen with this courteous and comprehensive observation, he piled log upon log, till the fire was half up the chimney. Then he got all the chairs, and made a semi-circle, and spread out the various garments to the genial heat; and so close that, had a spark flown, they would have been warmed with a vengeance, and the superiority of the male intellect demonstrated. This done, he retired, with a guilty air; for he did not want to be caught meddling in such frivolities by Miss Dover or Miss Maitland. However, he was quite safe; those superior spirits were wholly occupied with the loftier

THEY STROLLED VERY SLOWLY BY THE FAIR RIVER.

things of the mind, especially the characters of their neighbors.

I must now go for these truants that are giving everybody so much trouble.

When Fanny fell lame, and said she was very sorry, but she must go home and change her boots, Zoe was for going home too. But Fanny, doubting her sincerity, was peremptory, and said they had only to stroll slowly on, and then turn; she should meet them coming back. Zoe colored high, suspecting they had seen the last of this ingenious young lady.

"What a good girl!" cried Severne.

"I am afraid she is a very naughty girl," said Zoe, faintly; and the first effect of Fanny's retreat was to make her a great deal more reserved and less sprightly.

Severne observed, and understood, and saw he must give her time. He was so respectful, as well as tender, that, by degrees, she came out again, and beamed with youth and happiness.

They strolled very slowly by the fair river, and the pretty little nothings they said to each other began to be mere vehicles for these soft tones and looks, in which love is made, far more than by the words themselves.

When they started on this walk, Severne had no distinct nor serious views on Zoe. But he had been playing with fire for some time, and so now he got well burnt.

Walking slowly by his side, and conscious of being wooed, whatever the words might be, Zoe was lovelier than ever. Those lowered lashes, that mantling cheek, those soft, tender murmurs, told him he was dear, and thrilled his heart, though a cold one compared with hers.

He was in love — as much as he could be, and more than he had ever been before. He never even asked himself whether permanent happiness was likely to

spring from this love: he was self-indulgent, reckless, and in love.

He looked at her, wished he could recall his whole life, and sighed.

"Why do you sigh?" said she, gently.

"I don't know. Yes, I do. Because I am not happy."

"Not happy?" said she. "You ought to be; and I am sure you deserve to be."

"I don't know that. However, I think I shall be happier in a few minutes, or else very unhappy indeed. That depends on you."

"On me, Mr. Severne?" and she blushed crimson, and her bosom began to heave. His words led her to expect a declaration and a proposal of marriage.

He saw her mistake; and her emotion spoke so plainly and sweetly, and tried him so, that it cost him a great effort not to clasp her in his arms. But that was not his cue at present. He lowered his eyes, to give her time, and said sadly, "I cannot help seeing that, somehow, there is suspicion in the air about me. Miss Maitland puts questions, and drops hints. Miss Dover watches me like a lynx. Even you gave me a hint the other day that I never talk to you about my relations, and my past life."

"Pray do not confound me with other people," said Zoe, proudly. "If I am curious, it is because I know you must have done many good things, and clever things; but you have too little vanity, or too much pride, to tell them even to one who — esteems you, and could appreciate."

"I know you are as generous and noble as most people are narrow-minded," said Severne, enthusiastically; "and I have determined to tell you all about myself."

Zoe's cheeks beamed with gratified pride, and her eyes sparkled.

"Only, as I would not tell it to anybody but you, I must stipulate that you receive it in sacred confidence and not repeat it to a living soul."

"Not even to my brother, who loves you so?"

"Not even to him."

This alarmed the instinctive delicacy and modesty of a truly virgin soul.

"I am not experienced," said she. "But I feel I ought not to yield to curiosity, and hear from you anything I am forbidden to tell my brother. You might as well say I must not tell my mother; for dear Harrington is all the mother I have; and I am sure he is a true friend to you" (this last a little reproachfully).

But for Severne's habitual self-command, he would have treated this delicacy as ridiculous prudery; but he was equal to greater difficulties.

"You are right, by instinct, in everything. Well, then, I shall tell you, and you shall see at once whether it ought to be repeated, or to remain a sacred deposit between me and the only creature I have the courage to tell it to."

Zoe lowered her eyes, and marked the sand with her parasol. She was a little puzzled now, and half conscious that, somehow, he was tying her to secrecy with silk instead of rope; but she never suspected the deliberate art and dexterity with which it was done.

Severne then made the revelation, which he had been preparing for a day or two past; and, to avoid eternal comments by the author, I must once more call in the artful aid of the printers. The true part of Mr. Severne's revelation is in italics; the false in ordinary type.

"*When my father died, I inherited an estate in Huntingdonshire. It was not so large as Vizard's, but it was clear. Not a mortgage nor encumbrance on it. I had a younger brother;* a fellow with charming manners, and

very accomplished. These were his ruin; he got into high society in London; *but high society is not always good society.* He became connected with a fast lot, some of the young nobility. Of course he could not vie with them. He got deeply in debt. Not but what they were in debt, too, every one of them. He used to send to me for money oftener than I liked; but I never suspected the rate he was going at. I was anxious, too, about him; but I said to myself, he was just sowing his wild oats, like other fellows. Well, it went on, until — to his misfortune, and mine — he got entangled in some disgraceful transactions; the general features are known to all the world. I dare say you have heard of one or two young noblemen who committed forgeries on their relations and friends some years ago. *One of them, the son of an earl, took his sister's whole fortune out of her bank, with a single forged check. I believe the sum total of his forgeries was over one hundred thousand pounds. His father could not find half the money. A number of the nobility had to combine to repurchase the documents; many of them were in the hands of the Jews; and I believe a composition was effected, with the help of a very powerful barrister, an M.P. He went out of his line on this occasion, and mediated between the parties.* What will you think when I tell you that my brother, the son of my father and my mother, was one of these forgers; a criminal?"

"My poor friend!" cried Zoe, clasping her innocent hands.

"It was a thunder-clap. I had a great mind to wash my hands of it, and let him go to prison. But how could I? The struggle ended in my doing like the rest. Only poor I had no noble kinsmen with long purses to help me, and no Solicitor-General to mediate *sub rosa.* The total amount would have swamped my family acres.

I got them down to sixty per cent, and that only crippled my estate forever. As for my brother, he fell on his knees to me. But I could not forgive him. *He left the country with a hundred pounds* I gave him. *He is in Canada, and only known there as a most respectable farmer.* He talks of paying me back. That I shall believe when I see it. All I know for certain is that his crime has mortgaged my estate, and left me poor — and suspected."

Whilst Severne related this, there passed a somewhat notable thing in the world of mind. The inventor of this history did not understand it; the hearer did, and accompanied it with innocent sympathetic sighs. Her imagination, more powerful and precise than the inventor's, pictured the horror of the high-minded brother, his agony, his shame, his respect for law and honesty, his pity for his own flesh and blood, his struggle, and the final triumph of fraternal affection. Every line of the figment was alive to her, and she *realized* the tale. Severne only repeated it.

At the last touch of his cold art, the warm-hearted girl could contain no longer.

"Oh! poor Mr. Severne!" she cried; "poor Mr. Severne!" and the tears ran down her cheeks.

He looked at her first with a little astonishment, — fancy taking his little narrative to heart like that! — then with compunction, and then with a momentary horror at himself, and terror at the impassable gulf fixed between them, by her rare goodness and his depravity.

Then for a moment he felt; and felt all manner of things at once. "Oh, don't cry," he blurted out, and began to blubber himself at having made her cry at all, and so unfairly. It was his lucky hour; this hysterical effusion, undignified by a single grain of active contrition, or even penitent resolve, told in his favor. They

mingled their tears; and hearts cannot hold aloof, when tears come together. Yes, they mingled their tears, and the crocodile tears were the male's, if you please, and the woman's tears were pure holy drops, that angels might have gathered, and carried them to God for pearls of the human soul.

After they had cried together over the cool figment, Zoe said: "I do not repent my curiosity now. You did well to tell me. Oh, no, you were right, and I will never tell anybody. People are narrow-minded. They shall never cast your brother's crime in your teeth, nor your own losses I esteem you for — oh, so much more than ever! I wonder you could tell me."

"You would not wonder if you knew how superior you are to all the world; how noble, how generous, and how I" —

"Oh! Mr. Severne, it is going to rain. We must get home as fast as ever we can."

They turned; and Zoe, with true virgin coyness, and elastic limbs, made the coming rain an excuse for such swift walking, that Severne could not make tender love to her. To be sure Apollo ran after Daphne, with his little proposals; but I take it he ran mute — till he found he couldn't catch her. Indeed, it was as much as Severne could do to keep up with her "fair heel and toe." But I ascribe this to her not wearing high heels, ever since Fanny told her she was just a little too tall, and she was novice enough to believe her.

She would not stop for the drizzle; but at last it came down with such a vengeance, that she was persuaded to leave the path and run for a cattle-shed at some distance. Here she and Severne were imprisoned. Luckily for them "the kye had not come hame," and the shed was empty. They got into the farthest corner of it, for it was all open towards the river; and the rain pattered on the roof as if it would break it.

Thus driven together, was it wonderful that soon her hand was in his, and that, as they purred together, and murmured soft nothings, she was once surprised into returning the soft pressure which he gave it so often?

The plump declaration she had fled from, and now seemed deliciously resigned to, did not actually come. But he did what she valued more, he resumed his confidences; told her he had vices; was fond of gambling. Excused it on the score of his loss by his brother. Said he hoped soon to hear good news from Canada. Didn't despair. Was happy now, in spite of all. Had been happy ever since he had met *her*. What declaration was needed? The understanding was complete. Neither doubted the other's love; and Zoe would have thought herself a faithless, wicked girl, if, after this, she had gone and accepted any other man.

But presently she had a misgiving, and looked at her watch. Yes, it wanted but one hour to dinner. Now her brother was rather a Tartar about punctuality at dinner. She felt she was already in danger of censure for her long *tête-à-tête* with Severne, though the rain was the culprit. She could not afford to draw every eye upon her, by being late for dinner along with him.

She told Severne they must go home now, rain or no rain; and she walked resolutely out into the weather.

Severne did not like it at all, but he was wise enough to deplore it only on her account; and indeed her light alpaca was soon drenched, and began to cling to her.

But the spirited girl only laughed at his condolences, as she hurried on. "Why, it is only warm water," said she; "this is no more than a bath in the summer sea. Bathing is getting wet through in blue flannel. Well, I am bathing in blue alpaca."

"But it will ruin your dress."

"My dress! why, it is as old as the hills. When

I get home I'll give it to Rosa — ready washed, ha! ha!"

The rain pelted and poured, and long before they reached the inn, Zoe's dress had become an external cuticle, an alpaca skin.

But innocence is sometimes very bold. She did not care a bit; and, to tell the truth, she had little need to care. Beauty so positive as hers is indomitable. The petty accidents that are the terrors of homely charms, seem to enhance queen beauty. Dishevelled hair adorns it; close-bound hair adorns it. Simplicity adorns it. Diamonds adorn it. Everything seems to adorn it, because the truth is, it adorns everything. And so Zoe, drenched with rain, and her dress a bathing-gown, was only a Greek goddess tinted blue, her bust and shoulders and her moulded figure covered, yet revealed. What was she to an artist's eye? Just the Townley Venus with her sculptor's cunning draperies, and Juno's gait.

"Et vera incessa patuit Dea.

When she got to the hotel, she held up her finger to Severne with a pretty peremptoriness. She had shown him so much tenderness, she felt she had a right to order him now: "I must beg of you," said she, "to go straight to your room, and dress very quickly, and present yourself to Harrington five minutes before dinner, at least."

"I will obey," said he, obsequiously.

That pleased her, and she kissed her hand to him, and scudded to her own room.

At sight of the blazing fire and provident preparations, she started, and said aloud, "Oh, how nice of them!" and, all dripping as she was, she stood there with her young heart in a double glow.

Such a nature as hers has too little egotism, and low-

bred vanity, to undervalue worthy love. The infinite heart of a Zoe Vizard can love but one with passion, yet ever so many more with warm and tender affection.

She gave Aunt Maitland credit for this provident affection. It was out of the sprightly Fanny's line; and she said to herself, "Dear old thing! there, I thought she was bottling up a lecture for me, and all the time her real anxiety was lest I should be wet through." Thereupon she settled in her mind to begin loving Aunt Maitland from that hour. She did not ring for her maid till she was nearly dressed; and, when Rosa came, and exclaimed at the condition of her cast-off robes, she laughed, and told her it was nothing — the Maine was nice and warm — pretending she had been in it. She ordered her to dry the dress, and iron it.

"Why, la, miss, you'll never wear it again, to be sure?" said Rosa demurely.

"I don't know," said the young lady, archly; "but I mean to take great care of it," and burst out laughing like a peal of silver bells, because she was in high spirits, and saw what Rosa would be at.

Give away the gown she had been wooed and wet through in? no, thank you! Such gowns as these be landmarks, my masters.

Vizard, unconscious of her arrival, was walking up and down the room, fidgeting more and more, when in came Zoe, dressed high in black silk and white lace, looking ever so cosey, and blooming like a rose.

"What!" said he; "in, and dressed!" He took her by the shoulders, and gave her a great kiss. "You young monkey!" said he; "I was afraid you were washed away."

Zoe suggested that would only have been a woman obliterated.

"That is true," said he, with an air of hearty conviction. "I forgot that."

He then inquired if she had had a nice walk.

"Oh, beautiful! imprisoned half the time in a cow-shed, and then drenched; but I'll have a nice walk with you, dear, up and down the room."

"Come on, then."

So she put her right hand on his left shoulder, and gave him her left hand, and they walked up and down the room, Zoe beaming with happiness and affection for everybody, and walking at a graceful bend.

Severne came in, dressed, and perfect as though just taken out of a band-box. He sat down at a little table, and read a little journal unobtrusively. It was his cue to divest his late *tête-à-tête* of public importance.

Then came dinner, and two of the party absent. Vizard heard their voices going like mill-clacks at this sacred hour, and summoned them rather roughly, as stated above. His back was to Zoe, and she rubbed her hands gayly to Severne, and sent him a flying whisper: "Oh, what fun! we are the culprits, and they are the ones scolded."

Dinner waited ten minutes, and then the defaulters appeared. Nothing was said, but Vizard looked rather glum; and Aunt Maitland cast a vicious look at Severne and Zoe: they had made a forced march, and outflanked her. She sat down, and bided her time, like a fowler waiting till the ducks come within shot.

But the conversation was commonplace, inconsecutive, shifty, and vague, and it was two hours before anything came within shot. All this time not a soul suspected the ambushed fowler.

At last Vizard having thrown out one of his hints that the fair sex are imperfect, Fanny, being under the influence of Miss Maitland's revelations, ventured to suggest that they had no more faults than men, and *certainly* were not more deceitful.

"Indeed?" said Vizard. "Not — more — *deceitful!* Do you speak from experience?"

"Oh, no, no!" said Fanny, getting rather frightened. "I only think so, somehow."

"Well, but you must have a reason. May I respectfully inquire whether more men have jilted you than you have jilted?"

"You may inquire as respectfully as you like; but I shan't tell you."

"That is right, Miss Dover," said Severne: "don't you put up with his nonsense. He knows nothing about it. Women are angels, compared with men. The wonder is, how they can waste so much truth and constancy and beauty upon the foul sex. To my mind, there is only one thing we beat you in: we do stick by each other rather better than you do. You are truer to us; we are a little truer to each other."

"Not a little," suggested Vizard dryly.

"For my part," said Zoe, blushing pink at her boldness in advancing an opinion on so large a matter, "I think these comparisons are rather narrow-minded: what have *we* to do with bad people, male or female? A good man is good, and a good woman is good; still, I do think that women have greater hearts to love, and men, perhaps, greater hearts for friendship;" then, blushing roseate, "even in the short time we have been here, we have seen two gentlemen give up pleasure for self-denying friendship. Lord Uxmoor gave us all up for a sick friend. Mr. Severne did more, perhaps; for he lost that divine singer. You will never hear her now, Mr. Severne."

The Maitland gun went off. "A sick friend! — Mr. Severne? — ha, ha, ha! You silly girl, he has got no sick friend. He was at the gaming-table. That was his sick friend."

It was an effective discharge. It winged a duck or two. It killed as follows: the tranquillity, the good-humor, and the content of the little party.

Severne started, and stared, and lost color, and then cast at Vizard a venomous look never seen on his face before; for he naturally concluded that Vizard had betrayed him.

Zoe was amazed, looked instantly at Severne, saw it was true, and turned pale at his evident discomfiture. Her lover had been guilty of deceit — mean and rather heartless deceit.

Even Fanny winced at the point-blank denunciation of a young man who was himself polite to everybody. She would have done it in a very different way — insinuations, innuendo, etc.

"They have found you out, old fellow," said Vizard, merrily; "but you need not look as if you had robbed a church. Hang it all! a fellow has a right to gamble, if he chooses. Any way, he paid for his whistle; for he lost three hundred pounds."

"Three hundred pounds!" cried the terrible old maid. "Wherever did he get them to lose?"

Severne divined that he had nothing to gain by fiction here; so he said, sullenly, "I got them from Vizard; but I gave him value for them."

"You need not publish our private transactions, Ned," said Vizard. "Miss Maitland, this is really not in your department."

"Oh, yes, it is!" said she, "and so you'll find."

This pertinacity looked like defiance. Vizard rose from his chair, bowed ironically, with the air of a man not disposed for a hot argument. "In that case, with permission, I'll withdraw to my veranda, and, in that — (he struck a light) peaceful — (here he took a suck) shade" —

"You will meditate on the charms of Ina Klosking."

Vizard received this poisoned arrow in the small of the back, as he was sauntering out. He turned swiftly, as if a man had struck him, and, for a single moment, he looked downright terrible, and wonderfully unlike the easy-going Harrington Vizard. But he soon recovered himself. "What! you listen, do you?" said he; and turned contemptuously on his heel without another word.

There was an uneasy, chilling pause. Miss Maitland would have given something to withdraw her last shot. Fanny was very uncomfortable, and fixed her eyes on the table. Zoe, deeply shocked at Severne's deceit, was now amazed and puzzled about her brother. "Ina Klosking!" inquired she; "who is that?"

"Ask Mr. Severne," said Miss Maitland sturdily.

Now, Mr. Severne was sitting silent, but with restless eyes, meditating how he should get over that figment of his about the sick friend.

Zoe turned round on him, fixed her glorious eyes full upon his face, and said, rather imperiously, "Mr. Severne, who is Ina Klosking?"

Mr. Severne looked up blankly in her face, and said nothing.

She colored at not being answered, and repeated her question (all this time Fanny's eyes were fixed on the young man even more keenly than Zoe's), "who — and what — is Ina Klosking?"

"She is a public singer."

"Do you know her?"

"Yes; I heard her sing at Vienna."

"Yes, yes; but do you know her to speak to?"

He considered half a moment, and then said he had not that honor. "But," said he, rather hurriedly, "somebody or other told me she had come out at the opera here, and made a hit."

"What, in Siebel?"

"I don't know; but I saw large bills out with her name. She made her *début* in Gounod's 'Faust.'"

"It is *my* Siebel!" cried Zoe, rapturously. "Why, aunt, no wonder Harrington admires her. For my part, I adore her."

"*You*, child! That is quite a different matter."

"No, it is not. He is like me; he has only seen her once, as I have, and on the stage."

"Fiddle-de-dee! I tell you he is in love with her, over head and ears; he is wonderfully inflammable for a woman-hater. Ask Mr. Severne; he knows."

"Mr. Severne, is my brother in love with that lady?"

Severne's turn had come; that able young man saw his chance, and did as good a bit of acting as ever was extemporized even by an Italian mime.

"Miss Vizard," said he, fixing his hazel eyes on her for the first time, in a way that made her feel his power, "what passed in confidence between two friends ought to be sacred. Don't — you — think so?" (The girl quivered, remembering the secret he had confessed to her.) "Miss Maitland has done your brother and me the honor to listen to our secrets. She shall repeat them, if she thinks it delicate; but I shall not, without Vizard's consent; and, more than that, the conversation seems to me to be taking the turn of casting blame, and ridicule, and I don't know what, on the best-hearted, kindest-hearted, truest-hearted, noblest, and manliest man I know. I decline to take any further share in it."

With these last words in his mouth, he stuck his hands defiantly into his pockets, and stalked out into the veranda, looking every inch a man.

Zoe folded her arms, and gazed after him, with undisguised admiration. How well everything he did became him! his firing up — his brusquerie — the very move-

ments of his body, all so piquant, charming, and unwomanly. As he vanished from her admiring eyes, she turned, with flaming cheeks, on Miss Maitland, and said, "Well, aunt, you have driven them both out at the window; now, say something pretty to Fanny and me, and drive us out at the door."

Miss Maitland hung her head; she saw she had them all against her but Fanny, and Fanny was a trimmer. She said, sorrowfully, "No, Zoe. I feel how unattractive I have made the room. I have driven away the gods of your idolatry — they are only idols of clay; but that you can't believe. I will banish nobody else, except a cross-grained but respectable old woman, who is too experienced, and too much soured by it, to please young people when things are going wrong."

With this she took her bed-candle, and retired.

Zoe had an inward struggle. As Miss Maitland opened her bedroom door, she called to her, "Aunt! one word. Was it you that ordered the fire in my bedroom?"

Now, if she had received the answer she expected, she meant to say, "Then please let me forget everything else you have said or done to-day." But Miss Maitland stared a little, and said, "Fire in your bedroom; no."

"Oh! — then I have nothing to thank you for this day," said Zoe, with all the hardness of youth; though, as a general rule, she had not her share of it.

The old lady winced visibly, but she made a creditable answer. "Then, my dear, you shall have my prayers this night; and it does not matter much whether you thank me for them or not."

As she disappeared, Zoe flung herself wearily on a couch, and very soon began to cry. Fanny ran to her, and nestled close to her, and the two had a rock together, Zoe crying, and Fanny coaxing and comforting.

"Ah!" sighed Zoe; "this was the happiest day of my life; and see how it ends! Quarrelling and deceit; the one I hate, the other I despise. No, never again, until I have said my prayers, and am just going to sleep, will I cry, 'O giorno felice!' as I did this afternoon, when the rain was pouring on me; but my heart was all in a glow."

These pretty little lamentations of youth were interrupted by Mr. Severne slipping away from his friend, to try and recover lost ground.

He was coolly received by Zoe; then he looked dismayed, but affected not to understand; then Zoe pinched Fanny, which meant, "I don't choose to put him on his defence; but I am dying to hear if he has anything to say." Thereupon Fanny obeyed that significant pinch, and said, "Mr. Severne, my cousin is not a woman of the world; she is a country girl, with old-fashioned romantic notions that a man should be above telling fibs; I have known her longer than you, and I see she can't understand your passing off the gambling-table for a sick friend."

"Why, I never did," said he, as bold as brass.

"Mr. Severne!"

"Miss Dover! My sick friend was at the 'Golden Star,' that's a small hotel in a different direction from the Kursaal. I was there from seven o'clock till nine. You ask the waiter if you don't believe me."

Fanny giggled at this inadvertent speech; but Zoe's feelings were too deeply engaged to shoot fun flying. "Fanny," cried she eagerly, "I heard him tell the coachman to drive him to that very place, the 'Golden Star.'"

"Really?" said Fanny, mystified.

"Indeed I did, dear. I remember the 'Golden Star,' distinctly."

"Ladies, I was there till nine o'clock. Then I started for the theatre. Unfortunately the theatre is attached to the Kursaal. I thought I would just look in for a few minutes. In fact I don't think I was there half an hour. But Miss Maitland is quite right in one thing. I lost more than two hundred pounds, all through playing on a false system. Of course I know I had no business to go there at all, when I might have been by your side."

"And heard La Klosking."

"It was devilish bad taste, and you may well be surprised and offended."

"No, no; not at that," said Zoe.

"But hang it all! don't make a fellow worse than he is. Why should I invent a sick friend? I suppose I have a right to go to the Kursaal if I choose. At any rate I mean to go to-morrow afternoon, and win a pot of money. Hinder me who can."

Zoe beamed with pleasure. "That spiteful old woman! I am ashamed of myself. Of course you *have*. It becomes a man to say *je veux;* and it becomes a woman to yield. Forgive our unworthy doubts. We will all go to the Kursaal to-morrow."

The reconciliation was complete; and to add to Zoe's happiness, she made a little discovery. Rosa came in to see if she wanted anything. That, you must know, was Rosa's way of saying, "It is very late. *I*'m tired; so the sooner *you* go to bed the better." And Zoe was by nature so considerate, that she often went to bed more for Rosa's convenience than her own inclination.

But this time she said sharply, "Yes, I do. I want to know who had my fire lighted for me in the middle of summer."

"Why, squire, to be sure," said Rosa.

"What! *my* brother?"

"Yes, miss; and seen to it all hisself: leastways I

found the things properly muddled. 'Twas to be seen a man had been at 'em."

Rosa retired, leaving Zoe's face a picture.

Just then Vizard put his head cautiously in at the window, and said, in a comic whisper, "Is she gone?"

"Yes, she is gone," cried Zoe, "and you are wanted in her place." She ran to meet him. "Who ordered a fire in my room, and muddled all my things?" said she, severely.

"I did. What of that?"

"Oh, nothing; only now I know who is my friend. Young people, here's a lesson for you. When a lady is out in the rain, don't prepare a lecture for her, like Aunt Maitland, but light her a fire, like this dear old duck of a woman-hating impostor. Kiss me!" (violently.)

"There — pest."

"That is not enough, nor half. There, and there, and there, and there, and there, and there."

"Now, look here, my young friend," said Vizard, holding her lovely head by both ears; "you are exciting yourself about nothing, and that will end in one of your headaches. So just take your candle, and go to bed, like a good little girl."

"Must I? Well, then, I will. Good-by, tyrant dear. Oh, how I love you! Come, Fanny."

She gave her hand shyly to Severne, and soon they were both in Zoe's room.

Rosa was dismissed, and they had their chat; but it was nearly all on one side. Fanny had plenty to say, but did not say it. She had not the heart to cloud that beaming face again so soon; she temporized: Zoe pressed her with questions too; but she slurred things. Zoe asked her why Miss Maitland was so bitter against poor Mr. Severne: Fanny said, in an off-hand way, "Oh, it is only on your account she objects to him."

"And what are her objections?"

"Oh, only grammatical ones, dear. She says his *antecedents* are obscure, and his *relatives* unknown: ha, ha, ha!" Fanny laughed, but Zoe did not see the fun. Then Fanny stroked her down.

"Never mind that old woman. *I* shall interfere properly, if I see you in danger: it was monstrous, her making an *esclandre* at the very dinner-table, and spoiling your happy day."

"But she hasn't," cried Zoe, eagerly. "'All's well that ends well.' I am happy — oh, so happy! You love me. Harrington loves me. *He* loves me. What more can any woman ask for than to be *amata bene?*"

This was the last word between Zoe and Fanny upon St. Brooch's day.

As Fanny went to her own room, the vigilant Maitland opened her door that looked upon the corridor, and beckoned her in. "Well," said she, "did you speak to Zoe?"

"Just a word before dinner. Aunt, she came in wet to the skin, and in higher spirits than Rosa ever knew her."

Aunt groaned.

"And what do you think! Her spoiled dress, she ordered it to be ironed and put by. *It is a case.*"

Next day they all met at a late breakfast, and good-humor was the order of the day.

This encouraged Zoe to throw out a feeler about the gambling tables. Then Fanny said it must be nice to gamble, because it was so naughty. "In a long experience," said Miss Dover, with a sigh, "I have found that whatever is nice is naughty, and whatever is naughty is nice."

"There's a short code of morals," observed Vizard, "for the use of seminaries. Now let us hear Severne;

he knows all the defences of gambling lunacy has discovered."

Severne, thus appealed to, said play was like other things, bad only when carried to excess. "At Homburg, where the play is fair, what harm can there be in devoting two or three hours of a long day to *trente et quarante?* The play exercises memory, judgment, *sang-froid,* and other good qualities of the mind; above all, it is on the square. Now, buying and selling shares without delivery — bulling, and bearing, and rigging, and stock exchange speculations in general — are just as much gambling; but with cards all marked, and dice loaded — and a fair player has no chance. The world," said this youthful philosopher, "is taken in by words. The truth is, that gambling with cards is fair, and gambling without cards a swindle."

"He is hard upon the City," said Vizard; "but no matter. Proceed, young man. Develop your code of morals for the amusement of mankind, while duller spirits inflict instruction."

"You have got my opinion," said Severne; "oblige us with yours."

"No; mine would not be popular just now: I reserve it till we are there, and can see the lunatics at work."

"Oh, then we are to go!" cried Fanny. "Oh, be joyful!"

"That depends on Miss Maitland. It is not in my department."

Instantly four bright eyes were turned piteously on the awful Maitland.

"Oh, aunt," said Zoe, pleadingly, "*do* you think there would be any great harm in our — just for once in a way?"

"My dear," said Miss Maitland, solemnly, "I cannot say that I approve of public gambling in general. But

at Homburg the company is select. I have seen a German prince, a Russian prince, and two English countesses, the very *élite* of London society, seated at the same table in the Kursaal. I think, therefore, there can be no harm in your going, under the conduct of older persons — myself, for example, and your brother."

"Code three," suggested Vizard — "the chaperonian code."

"And a very good one, too," said Zoe. "But, aunt, must we look on, or may we play, just a little little?"

"My dear, there can be no great harm in playing a little, in *good company* — if you play with your own money." She must have one dig at Severne.

"I sha'n't play very deep, then," said Fanny, "for I have got no money hardly."

Vizard came to the front, like a man. "No more should I," said he, "but for Herries and Co. As it is, I am a Crœsus, and I shall stand one hundred pounds, which you three ladies must divide; and between you, no doubt, you will break the bank."

Acclamations greeted this piece of misogyny. When they had subsided, Severne was called on to explain the game, and show the young ladies how to win a fortune with £33 6*s.* 8*d.*

The table was partly cleared, two packs of cards sent for, and the professor lectured. "This," said he, "is the cream of the game. Six packs are properly shuffled, and properly cut; the players put their money on black or red, which is the main event, and is settled thus: The dealer deals the cards in two rows. He deals the *first* row for black, and stops the moment the cards pass thirty. That deal determines how near *noir* can get to thirty-one."

Severne then dealt for *noir*, and the cards came as follows: —

Queen of hearts — four of clubs — ten of spades — nine of diamonds: total, thirty-three.

He then dealt for red: —

Knave of clubs — ace of diamonds — two of spades — king of spades — nine of hearts: total, thirty-two.

"Red wins, because the cards dealt for red come nearest thirty-one. Besides that," said he, "you can bet on the color, or against it. The actual color of the first card the player turns up on the black line must be black or red. Whichever happens to be it is called 'the color.' Say it is red; then, if the black line of cards wins, color loses. Now I will deal again for both events."

"I deal for *noir*."

"Nine of diamonds. Red, then, is the actual color turned up on the black line. Do you bet for it, or against it?"

"I bet for it," cried Zoe. "It's my favorite color."

"And what do you say on the main event?"

"Oh, red on that too."

"Very good. I go on dealing for *noir*. Queen of diamonds, three of spades, knave of hearts — thirty-two. That looks ugly for your two events, black coming so near as thirty-two. Now for red. Four of hearts, knave of spades, seven of diamonds, queen of clubs — thirty-one, by Jove! *Rouge gagne et couleur*. There is nothing like courage. You have won both events."

"Oh, what a nice game!" cried Zoe.

He then continued to deal, and they all betted on the main event and the color, staking fabulous sums, till at last both numbers came up thirty-one.

Thereupon Severne informed them that half the stakes belonged to him. That was the trifling advantage accorded to the bank.

"Which trifling advantage," said Vizard, "has enriched

the man-eating company, and their prince, and built the Kursaal, and will clean you all out, if you play long enough."

"That," said Severne, "I deny; it is more than balanced by the right the players have of doubling, till they gain, and by the maturity of the chances. I will explain this to the ladies: you see, experience proves that neither red nor black can come up more than nine times running. When, therefore, either color has come up four times, you can put a moderate stake on the other color, and double on it till it *must* come by the laws of nature. Say red has turned four times. You put a napoleon on black; red gains. You lose a napoleon. You don't remove it, but double on it. The chances are now five to one you gain: but if you lose, you double on the same, and, when you have got to sixteen napoleons, the color must change; uniformity has reached its physical limit. That is called the maturity of the chances. Begin as unluckily as possible with five francs, and lose. If you have to double eight times before you win, it only comes to twelve hundred and eighty francs. Given, therefore, a man to whom fifty napoleons are no more than five francs to us, he can never lose if he doubles, like a Trojan, till the chances are mature. This is called 'the Martingale:' but observe, it only secures against loss. Heavy gains are made by doubling judiciously on the *winning* color, or by simply betting on short runs of it. When red comes up, back red, and double twice on it. Thus you profit by the remarkable and observed fact that the colors do not, as a rule, alternate, but reach ultimate equality by avoiding alternation, and making short runs, with occasional long runs; the latter are rare, and must be watched with a view to the balancing run of the other color. This is my system."

"And you really think you have invented it?" asked Vizard.

"I am not so conceited. My system was communicated to me, in the Kursaal itself — by an old gentleman."

"*An* old gentleman, or *the?*"

"Oh, Harrington!" cried Zoe; "fie!"

"My wit is appreciated at its value. Proceed, Ned."

Severne told him, a little defiantly, it was an old gentleman, with a noble head, a silvery beard, and the most benevolent countenance he ever saw.

"Curious place for his reverence to be in," hazarded Vizard.

"He saw me betting, first on the black, then on the red, till I was cleaned out, and then he beckoned me."

"Not a man of premature advice, though."

"He told me he had observed my play. I had been relying on the alternations of the colors, which alternation chance persistently avoids, and arrives at equality by runs. He then gave me a better system."

"And, having expounded his system, he illustrated it. Tell the truth now; he sat down, and lost the coat off his back. It followed his family acres."

"You are quite wrong again. He never plays. He has heart disease, and his physician has forbidden him all excitement."

"His nation?"

"Humph! French."

"Ah! the nation that produced '*le philosophe sans le savoir.*' And now it has added '*le philosophe sans le vouloir,*' and you have stumbled on him. What a life for an aged man! *Fortunatus ille senex qui ludicola vivit.* Tantalus handcuffed, and glowering over a gambling-table; a hell in a hell."

"Oh, Harrington!"

"Exclamations not allowed in sober argument, Zoe. Come, Ned, it is not heart disease, it is purse disease. Just do me a favor. Here are five sovereigns; give those to the old beggar, and let him risk them."

"I could hardly take such a liberty with an old gentleman of his age and appearance — a man of honor too, and high sentiments. Why, I'd bet seven to four he is one of Napoleon's old soldiers."

The ladies sided unanimously with Severne. "What! offer a *vieux de l'Empire* five pounds? Oh, fie!"

"Fiddle-de-dee!" said the indomitable Vizard. "Besides, Ned will do it with his usual grace. He will approach the son of Mars with that feigned humility which sits so well on youth, and ask him, as a personal favor, to invest five pounds for *him* at *rouge et noir*. The old soldier will stiffen into double dignity at first, then give him a low wink, and end by sitting down and gambling. He will be cautious at starting, as one who opens trenches for the siege of Mammon; but soon the veteran will get heated, and give battle; he will fancy himself at Jena, since the croupiers are Prussians. If he loses, you cut him dead, being a humdrum Englishman; and if he wins, he cuts you, and pockets the cash, being a Frenchman that talks sentiment."

This sally provoked a laugh, in which Severne joined, and said, "Really, for a landed proprietor, you know a thing or two." He consented at last, with some reluctance, to take the money; and none of the persons present doubted that he would execute the commission with a grace and delicacy all his own. Nevertheless, to run forward a little with the narrative, I must tell you that he never did hand that five pounds to the venerable sire; a little thing prevented him — the old man wasn't born yet.

"And now," said Vizard, "it is our last day in Homburg. You are all going to gratify your mania — lunacy is contagious; suppose I gratify mine."

"Do, dear," said Zoe; "and what is it?"

"I like your asking that; when it was publicly an

nounced last night, and I fled discomfited to my balcony, and, in my confusion, lighted a cigar. My mania is — the Klosking."

"That is not a mania; it is good taste. She is admirable."

"Yes, in an opera: but I want to know how she looks and talks, in a room; and that is insane of me."

"Then so you *shall*, insane or not. I will call on her this morning, and take you in my hand."

"What an ample palm! and what juvenile audacity! Zoe, you take my breath away."

"No audacity at all. I am sure of my welcome. How often must I tell you that we have mesmerized each other, that lady and I; and are only waiting an opportunity to rush into each other's arms! It began with her singling me out at the opera. But I dare say that was owing, *at first*, only to my being in full dress."

"No, no; to your being, like Agamemnon, a head taller than all the other Greeks."

"Harrington! I am not a Greek. I am a thorough English girl at heart, though I *am* as black as a coal."

"No apology needed in our present frame — you are all the more like the ace of spades."

"Do you want me to take you to the Klosking, sir? Then you had better not make fun of me. I tell you she sang to *me*, and smiled on *me*, and courtesied to *me;* and, now you have put it into my head, I mean to call upon her; and I will take you with me. What I shall do, I shall send in my card. I shall be admitted, and you will wait outside. As soon as she sees me, she will run to me with both hands out, and say, in excellent *French*, '*How*, mademoiselle! you have deigned to remember me, and to honor me with a visit.' Then I shall say, in school-French, 'Yes, madame; excuse the intrusion; but I was so charmed with your performance. We leave

Homburg to-morrow; and as, unfortunately for myself, I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you again upon the stage' — Then I shall stop, for her to interrupt me. Then she will interrupt me, and say charming things, as only foreigners can; and then I shall say, still in school-French, 'Madame, I am not alone. I have my brother with me. He adores music, and was as fascinated with your Siebel as myself. May I present him?' Then she will say, 'Oh, yes, by all means:' and I shall introduce you. Then you can make love to her. That will be droll. Fanny, I'll tell you every word he says."

"Make love to her!" cried Vizard. "Is this your estimate of a brother's motives? My object in visiting this lady is, not to feed my mania, but to cure it. I have seen her on the stage, looking like the incarnation of a poet's dream. I am *extasié* with her. Now let me catch her *en déshabille*, with her porter on one side, and her lover on the other: and so to Barfordshire, relieved of a fatal illusion."

"If that is your view, I'll go by myself; for I know she is a noble woman, and as much of a lady off the stage as on it. But suppose she should talk that dreadful guttural German, with its 'ochs' and its 'achs,' then where shall we all be? We must ask Mr. Severne to go with us."

"A good idea; no — a vile one. He is abominably handsome, and has the gift of the gab — in German, and other languages. He is sure to cut me out, the villain! Lock him up, somebody, till we come back."

"Now, Harrington, don't be absurd. He must, and shall, be of the party. I have my reasons. Mr. Severne, said she, turning on him with a blush and a divine smile, "you will oblige me, I am sure."

Severne's face turned as blank as a doll's, and he said nothing, one way or other.

It was settled that they should all meet at the Kursaal at four, to dine and play. But Zoe and her party would go on ahead by the one-o'clock train; and so she retired to put on her bonnet — a technical expression, which implies a good deal.

Fanny went with her, and, as events more exciting than the usual routine of their young lives were ahead, their tongues went a rare pace. But the only thing worth presenting to the reader came at the end, after the said business of the toilet had been despatched.

Zoe said, "I must go now, or I shall keep them waiting."

"Only one, dear," said Fanny, dryly.

"Why only one?"

"Mr. Severne will not go."

"That he will: I made a point of it."

"You did, dear; but still he will not go."

There was something in this, and in Fanny's tone, that startled Zoe, and puzzled her sorely. She turned round upon her, with flashing eye, and said, "No mysteries, please, dear. Why won't he go with me wherever I ask him to go? or, rather, what makes you think he won't?"

Said Fanny, thoughtfully, "I could not tell you, all in a moment, why I feel so positive. One puts little things together, that are nothing apart: one observes faces; I do, at least. You don't seem, to me, to be so quick at that as most girls. But, Zoe dear, you know very well one often knows a thing for certain, yet one doesn't know exactly what makes one know it."

Now Zoe's *amour propre* was wounded by Fanny's suggestion that Severne would not go to Homburg, or, indeed, to the world's end, with her; so she drew herself up in her grand way, and folded her arms, and said, a little haughtily, "Then tell me what is it you know

about *him* and me, without knowing how on earth you know it."

The supercilious tone and grand manner nettled Fanny, and it wasn't "brooch day:" she stood up to her lofty cousin like a little gamecock. "I know this," said she, with heightened cheek and flashing eyes, and a voice of steel; "you will never get Mr. Edward Severne into one room with Zoe Vizard and Ina Klosking."

Zoe Vizard turned very pale, but her eyes flashed defiance on her friend.

"That I'll know," said she, in a deep voice, with a little gasp, but a world of pride and resolution.

CHAPTER VIII.

The ladies went down together, and found Vizard ready. Mr Severne was not in the room. Zoe inquired after him.

"Gone to get a sun-shade," said Vizard.

"There!" said Zoe to Fanny, in a triumphant whisper. "What is that for, but to go with us?"

Fanny made no reply.

They waited some time for Severne, and his sun-shade.

At last Vizard looked at his watch, and said they had only five minutes to spare. "Come down and look after him. He *must* be somewhere about."

They went down, and looked for him all over the Zeil. He was not to be seen. At last Vizard took out his watch and said, "It is some misunderstanding: we can't wait any longer."

So he and Zoe went to the train. Neither said much on the way to Homburg; for they were both brooding. Vizard's good sense and right feeling were beginning to sting him a little for calling on the Klosking at all, and a great deal for using the enthusiasm of an inexperienced girl to obtain an introduction to a public singer. He sat moody in his corner, taking himself to task. Zoe's thoughts ran in quite another channel; but she was no easier in her mind. It really seemed as if Severne had given her the slip. Probably he would explain his conduct; but then that Fanny should foretell he would avoid her company, rather than call on Mademoiselle Klosking, and that Fanny should be right, this made the thing serious, and galled Zoe to the quick:

she was angry with Fanny for prophesying truly; she was rather angry with Severne for not coming, and more angry with him for making good Fanny's prediction.

Zoe Vizard was a good girl, and a generous girl; but she was not a humble girl: she had a great deal of pride, and her share of vanity, and here both were galled. Besides that, it seemed to her most strange and disheartening, that Fanny, who did not love Severne, should be able to foretell his conduct better than she, who did love him; such foresight looked like greater insight. All this humiliated, and also puzzled, her strangely; and so she sat brooding as deeply as her brother.

As for Vizard, by the time they got to Homburg, he had made up his mind. As they got out of the train he said, "Look here; I am ashamed of myself. I have the right to play the fool, alone: but I have no business to drag my sister into it. We will go somewhere else. There are lots of things to see. I give up the Klosking."

Zoe stared at him a moment, and then answered, with cold decision, "No, dear; you must allow me to call on her, now I am here. She won't bite *me*."

"Well, but it is a strange thing to do."

"What does that matter? We are abroad."

"Come, Zoe, I am much obliged to you; but give it up."

"No, dear."

Harrington smiled at her pretty peremptoriness, and misunderstood it. "This is carrying sisterly love a long way," said he. "I must try and rise to your level. I won't go with you."

"Then I shall go alone."

"What if I forbid you, miss?"

She tapped him on the cheek with her fingers. "Don't affect the tyrant, dear; you can't manage it. Fanny

said something that has mortified me. I shall go; you can do as you like. But, stop; where does she live?"

"Suppose I decline to tell you? I am seized with a virtuous fit — a regular paroxysm."

"Then I shall go to the opera and inquire. But (coaxingly) you will tell me, dear."

"There," said Harrington, "you wicked, tempting girl, my sham virtue has oozed away, and my real mania triumphs. She lives at the 'Golden Star.' I was weak enough to send Harris in last night to learn."

Zoe smiled.

He hailed a conveyance; and they started at once for the "Golden Star."

"Zoe," said Harrington, gravely, "something tells me I am going to meet my fate."

"All the better," said Zoe; "I wish you to meet your fate. My love for my brother is not selfish. I am sure she is a good woman. Perhaps I may find out something."

"About what?"

"Oh, never mind."

CHAPTER IX.

All this time Ina Klosking was rehearsing at the theatre, quite unconscious of the impending visit. A royal personage had commanded "Il Barbiere," the part of Rosina to be restored to the original key. It was written for a contralto, but transposed by the influence of Grisi.

Having no performance that night, they began to rehearse rather later than usual, and did not leave off till a quarter to four o'clock. Ina, who suffered a good deal at rehearsals from the inaccuracy and apathy of the people, went home fagged, and with her throat parched.

She ordered a cutlet, with potato chips, and lay down on the sofa. While she was reposing, came Joseph Ashmead, to cheer her, with good photographs of her, taken the day before. She smiled gratefully at his zeal. He also reminded her that he had orders to take her to the Kursaal: he said the tables would be well filled from five o'clock till quite late, there being no other entertainment on foot that evening.

Ina thanked him, and said she would not miss going on any account; but she was rather fatigued and faint.

"Oh, I'll wait for you as long as you like," said Ashmead, kindly.

"No, my good comrade," said Ina. "I will ask you to go to the manager and get me a little money, and then to the Kursaal and secure me a place at the table in the largest room. There I will join you. If *he* is not there — and I am not so mad as to think he will be there — I shall risk a few pieces myself, to be nearer him in mind."

This amazed Ashmead; it was so unlike her. "You are joking," said he. "Why, if you lose five napoleons at play, it will be your death; you will grizzle so."

"Yes; but I shall not lose. I am too unlucky in love, to lose at cards. I mean to play this afternoon; and never again in all my life. Sir, I am resolved."

"Oh, if you are resolved, there is no more to be said. I won't run my head against a brick wall."

Ina, being half a foreigner, thought this rather brusque. She looked at him askant, and said, quietly, "Others, besides me, can be stubborn, and get their own way, while speaking the language of submission. Not I invented volition."

With this flea in his ear, the faithful Joseph went off, chuckling, and obtained an advance from the manager, and then proceeded to the principal gaming-table, and, after waiting some time, secured a chair, which he kept for his chief.

An hour went by; an hour and a half. He was obliged, for very shame, to bet. This he did, five francs at a time; and his risk was so small, and his luck so even, that by degrees he was drawn into conversation with his neighbor, a young swell, who was watching the run of the colors, and betting in silver, and pricking a card, preparatory to going in for a great *coup*. Meantime he favored Mr. Ashmead with his theory of chances; and Ashmead listened very politely to every word; because he was rather proud of the other's notice — he was so handsome, well dressed, and well spoken.

Meantime Ina Klosking snatched a few minutes' sleep, as most artists can in the afternoon, and was awakened by the servant bringing in her frugal repast, a cutlet, and a pint of Bordeaux.

On her plate he brought her a large card, on which was printed "Miss Zoe Vizard:" this led to inquiries,

and he told her a lady of superlative beauty had called and left that card; Ina asked for a description.

"Ah, madame," said Karl, "do not expect details from me. I was too dazzled, and struck by lightning, to make an inventory of her charms."

"At least you can tell me was she dark or fair."

"Madame, she was dark as night; but glorious as the sun. Her earthly abode is the 'Russie,' at Frankfort; blest hotel!"

"Did she tell you so?"

"Indirectly. She wrote on the card with the smallest pencil I have hitherto witnessed: the letters are faint, the pencil being inferior to the case, which was golden. Nevertheless, as one is naturally curious to learn whence a bright vision has emerged, I permitted myself to decipher."

"Your curiosity was natural," said Ina dryly. "I will detain you with no more questions."

She put the card carefully away, and ate her modest repast. Then she made her afternoon toilet, and walked slowly and pensively to the Kursaal.

Nothing there was new to her, except to be going to the table without the man on whom it was her misfortune to have wasted her heart of gold.

I think, therefore, it would be better for me to enter the place in company with our novices; and, indeed, we must, or we shall derange the true order of time and sequence of incidents; for, please observe, all the English ladies of our story met at the Kursaal, while Ina was reposing on her sofa.

The first comers were Zoe and Harrington. They entered the noble hall, inscribed their names, and, by that simple ceremony, were members of a club, compared with which the greatest clubs in London are petty things; a club with spacious dining-rooms, ballrooms, concert-

rooms, gambling-rooms, theatre, and delicious gardens. The building that combined so many rich treats was colossal in size, and glorious with rich colors and gold laid on with Oriental profusion, and sometimes with Oriental taste.

Harrington took his sister through the drawing-rooms first; and she admired the unusual loftiness of the rooms, the blaze of white and gold, and of celadon green and gold, and the great Russian lustres, and the mighty mirrors. But when they got to the dining-room she was enchanted. That lofty and magnificent *salon*, with its daring mixture of red and black, and green and blue, all melted into harmony by the rivers of gold that ran boldly among them, went to her very heart. A Greek is half an Oriental, and Zoe had what may be called the courage of color. "Glorious!" she cried, and clasped her hands. "And see! what a background to the emerald grass outside, and the ruby flowers! They seem to come into the room through those monster windows."

"Splendid!" said Harrington, to whom all this was literally Greek. "I'm so excited, I'll order dinner."

"Dinner!" said Zoe disdainfully; and sat down and eyed the Mauresque walls around her, and the beauties of nature outside, and brought them together in one picture.

Harrington was a long time in conclave with M. Chevet. Then Zoe became impatient.

"Oh, do leave off ordering dinner," said she, "and take me out to that other paradise."

The Chevet shrugged his shoulders with pity. Vizard shrugged his too, to soothe him, and, after a few more hurried words, took the lover of color into the garden. It was delicious, with green slopes, and rich foliage and flowers, and enlivened by bright silk dresses, sparkling fitfully among the green leaves, or flaming out boldly in

the sun; and, as luck would have it, before Zoe had taken ten steps upon the green sward, the band of fifty musicians struck up and played, as fifty men rarely play together out of Germany.

Zoe was enchanted. She walked on air, and beamed as bright as any flower in the place.

After her first ejaculation at the sudden music, she did not speak for a good while, her content was so great. At last she said, "And do they leave this paradise, to gamble in a room?"

"Leave it? They shun it. The gamblers despise the flowers."

"How perverse people are! Excitement! Who wants any more than this?"

"Zoe," said Vizard, "innocent excitement can never compete with vicious."

"What! is it really wicked to play?"

"I don't know about wicked: you girls always run to the biggest word. But if avarice is a vice, gambling cannot be virtuous; for the root of gambling is mere avarice, weak avarice. Come, my young friend, *as we're quite alone*, I'll drop Thersites, and talk sense to you for once. Child, there are two roads to wealth: one is by the way of industry, skill, vigilance, and self-denial; and these are virtues, though sometimes they go with tricks of trade, hardness of heart, and taking advantage of misfortune, to buy cheap, and sell dear. The other road to wealth is by bold speculation, with risk of proportionate loss; in short, by gambling with cards, or without them. Now look into the mind of the gambler: he wants to make money, contrary to nature, and unjustly. He wants to be rewarded without merit, to make a fortune in a moment, and without industry, vigilance, true skill, or self-denial; 'a penny saved is a penny gained,' does not enter his creed. Strip the thing of its disguise, it is

avarice, sordid avarice; and I call it weak avarice, because the gambler relies on chance alone, yet accepts uneven chances, and hopes that Fortune will be as much in love with him as he is with himself. What silly egotism! You admire the Kursaal, and you are right; then do just ask yourself why is there nothing to pay for so many expensive enjoyments, and very little to pay for concerts and balls; low prices at the opera, which never pays its own expenses; even Chevet's dinners are reasonable, if you avoid his sham Johannisberg. All these cheap delights — the gold, the colors, the garden, the music, the lights — are paid for by the losses of feeble-minded avarice. But, there — I said all this to Ned Severne, and I might as well have preached sense to the wind."

"Harrington, I will not play. I am much happier walking, with my good brother" —

"Faute de mieux."

Zoe blushed, but would not hear — "and it is so good of you to make a friend of me, and talk sense. Oh! — see! — a lady with two blues! Come and look at her."

Before they had taken five steps, Zoe stopped short, and said, "It is Fanny Dover, I declare. She has not seen us yet. She is short-sighted. Come here." And the impetuous maid dragged him off behind a tuft of foliage.

When she had got him there, she said hotly that it was too bad.

"Oh, is it?" said he very calmly. "What?"

"Why, don't you see what she has done? You, so sensible, to be so slow about women's ways, and you are always pretending to know them; why, she has gone and bought that costume with the money you gave her to play with."

"Sensible girl!"

"Dishonest girl! *I* call her."

"There you go to your big words. No, no. A little money was given her for a bad purpose. She has used it for a frivolous one. That is 'a step in the right direction' — jargon of the day."

"But to receive money for one purpose, and apply it to another, is, — what do you call it — *chose?* — *détournement de fonds* — what is the English word? I've been abroad till I've forgotten English; oh, I know — embezzlement."

"Well, that is a big word for a small transaction; you have not dug in the mine of the vernacular for nothing."

"Harrington, if you don't mind, I do: so please come. I'll talk to her."

"Stop a moment," said Vizard very gravely. "You will not say one word to her."

"And why not, pray?"

"Because it would be unworthy of us, and cruel to her: barbarously cruel. What! call her to account before that old woman and me?"

"Why not? She is flaunting her blues before you two, and plenty more."

"Feminine logic, Zoe. The point is this — she is poor. You must know that. This comes of poverty and love of dress, — not of dishonesty and love of dress, — and just ask yourself, is there a creature that ought to be pitied more, and handled more delicately, than a *poor lady?* Why, you would make her writhe with shame and distress. Well, I do think there is not a single wild animal so cruel to another wild animal, as a woman is to a woman. You are cruel to one another by instinct. But I appeal to your reason — if you have any."

Zoe's eyes filled. "You are right," said she humbly. "Thank you, for thinking for me. I will not say a word to her before *you*."

"That is a good girl. But, come now, why say a word at all?"

"Oh, it is no use your demanding impossibilities, dear. I could no more help speaking to her than I could fly; and don't go fancying she will care a pin what I say, if I don't say it before a *gentleman*."

Having given him this piece of information, she left her ambush, and proceeded to meet the all-unconscious blue girl; but, even as they went, Vizard returned to his normal condition, and doled out, rather indolently, that they were out on pleasure, and might possibly miss the object of the excursion, if they were to encourage a habit of getting into rages about nothing.

Zoe was better than her word. She met Fanny with open admiration: to be sure, she knew that apathy, or even tranquillity, on first meeting the blues, would be instantly set down to envy.

"And where did you get it, dear?"

"At quite a small shop."

"French?"

"Oh, no; I think she was an Austrian; this is not a French mixture; loud, discordant colors, that is the French taste."

"Here is heresy," said Vizard; "why, I thought the French beat the world, in dress."

"Yes, dear," said Zoe, "in form and pattern; but Fanny is right; they make mistakes in color. They are terribly afraid of scarlet, but they are afraid of nothing else; and many of their mixtures are as discordant to the eye, as Wagner's music to the ear. Now, after all, scarlet is the king of colors; and there is no harm in King Scarlet, if you treat him with respect, and put a modest subject next to him."

"Gypsy locks, for instance," suggested Fanny, slyly.

Miss Maitland owned herself puzzled. "In my day,"

said she, "no one ever thought of putting blue upon blue; but really, somehow, it looks well."

"May I tell you why, aunt? because the dressmaker had a real eye, and has chosen the right tints of blue. It is all nonsense about one *color* not going with another. Nature defies that; and how? by choosing the very *tints* of each color that will go together. The sweetest room I ever saw was painted by a great artist; and, do you know, he had colored the ceiling blue and the walls green, and I assure you the effect was heavenly; but then, he had chosen the exact tints of green and blue that would go together. The draperies were between crimson and maroon. But there's another thing in Fanny's dress; it is velvet. Now blue velvet is blue to the mind, but it is not blue to the eye. You try and paint blue velvet; you will be surprised how much white you must lay on. The high lights of all velvets are white. This white helps to blend the two tints of blue."

"This is very instructive," said Vizard; "I was not aware I had a sister youthful but profound. Let us go in and dine."

Fanny demurred. She said she believed Miss Maitland wished to take one turn round the grounds first.

Miss Maitland stared, but assented in a mechanical way; and they commenced their promenade.

Zoe hung back, and beckoned her brother. "Miss Maitland!" said she, with such an air. "*She* wants to show her blues to all the world and his wife."

"Very natural," said Vizard. "So would you, if you were in a scarlet gown, with a crimson cloak."

Zoe laughed heartily at this, and forgave Fanny her new dress; but she had a worse bone than that to pick with her.

It was a short but agreeable promenade to Zoe; for,

now they were alone, her brother, instead of sneering, complimented her.

"Never you mind my impertinence," said he; "the truth is, I am proud of you. You are an observer."

"Me? Oh — in color."

"Never mind; an observer is an observer; and genuine observation is not so common. Men see and hear with their prejudices, and not their senses. Now we are going to those gaming-tables. At first, of course, you will play; but, as soon as ever you are cleaned out, observe! Let nothing escape that woman's eye of yours; and so we'll get something for our money."

"Harrington," said the girl, proudly, "I will be all eye and ear."

Soon after this they went in to dinner. Zoe cast her eyes round for Severne, and was manifestly disappointed at his not meeting them even there.

As for Fanny, she had attracted wonderful attention in the garden, and was elated; her conscience did not prick her in the least, for such a trifle as *détournement de fonds;* and public admiration did not improve her. She was sprightly and talkative as usual; but now she was also a trifle brazen, and pert all round.

And so the dinner passed, and they proceeded to the gaming-tables.

Miss Maitland and Zoe led. Fanny and Harrington followed; for Miss Dover, elated by the blues — though, by the by, one hears of them as depressing — and encouraged by admiration, and Chevet's violet-perfumed St. Peray, took Harrington's arm, really as if it belonged to her.

They went into the library first, and, after a careless inspection, came to the great attraction of the place. They entered one of the gambling-rooms.

The first impression was disappointing. There were two very long tables, rounded off at the ends; one for

trente et quarante, and one for *roulette*. At each table were seated a number of persons, and others standing behind them. Amongst the persons seated were the dealer, or, in *roulette*, the spinner. These officials sat in the centre, flanked on each side by croupiers with rakes; but at each end of the table there was also a croupier with his rake.

The rest were players or lookers-on; most of whom, by well-known gradations of curiosity and weakness, — to describe which, minutely, would be to write a little comedy that others have already written, — were drawn into playing at last. So fidgets the moth about the candle before he makes up, what, no doubt, the poor little soul calls his mind.

Our little party stopped first at *trente et quarante*, and Zoe commenced her observations. Instead of the wild excitement she had heard of, there was a subdued air, a forced quiet, especially among the seated players. A stern etiquette presided, and the gamblers shrouded themselves in well-bred stoicism — losing without open distress or ire, winning without open exultation. The old hands, especially, began play with a padlock on the tongue and a mask upon the face. There are masks, however, that do not hide the eye; and Miss Vizard caught some flashes that escaped the masks even then at the commencement of the play. Still, external stoicism prevailed, on the whole, and had a fixed example in the *tailleur* and the croupiers; playing many hours every day in the year but Good Friday, and always with other people's money, these men had parted with passion, and almost with sensation; they had become skilful automata, chanting a stave, and raking up or scattering haycocks of gold which to them were counters.

It was with the monotonous voice of an automaton they intoned: —

"Faites votre jeu, messieurs."

Then, after a pause of ten seconds, —

"Le jeu est fait."

Then, after two seconds, —

"Rien ne va plus."

Then mumble — mumble — mumble.

Then, "Rouge perd et couleur," or whatever might be the result.

Then the croupiers first raked in the players' losses with vast expedition; next they chucked the precise amount of the winnings on to each stake with unerring dexterity and the indifference of machines, and the chant recommenced: "Faites votre jeu, messieurs."

Pause, ten seconds.

"Le jeu est fait."

Pause, two seconds.

"Rien ne va plus."

The *tailleur* dealt, and the croupier intoned, "Rouge gagne et couleur perd;" the mechanical raking and dexterous chucking followed.

This with a low buzzing, and the deadened jingle of gold upon green cloth, and the light grating of the croupiers' rakes, was the first impression upon Zoe's senses; but the mere game did not monopolize her attention many seconds. There were other things better worth noting: the great varieties of human type, that a single passion had brought together in a small German town. Her ear was regaled with such a polyglot murmur as she had read of in Genesis, but had never witnessed before.

Here were the sharp Tuscan and the mellow Roman; the sibilation of England, the brogue of Ireland, the shibboleth of the Minories, the twang of certain American States, the guttural expectoration of Germany, the nasal emphasis of France, and even the modulated Hindostanee, and the sonorous Spanish, all mingling.

The types of face were as various as the tongues.

Here was the green-eyed Tartar, the black-eyed Italian, and the gray-eyed Saxon; faces all cheek-bones, and faces no cheek-bones; the red Arabian, the fair Dane, and the dark Hindoo.

Her woman's eye seized another phenomenon, the hands. Not nations only, but varieties of the animal kingdom were represented. Here were the white hands of fair women, and the red paws of obese shopkeepers, and the yellow, bird-like claws of old withered gamesters, all stretched out, side by side, in strange contrast, to place the stakes or scratch in the winnings; and often the winners put their palms, and paws, on their heap of gold, just as a dog does on a bone when other dogs are nigh.

But what Zoe's eye rested on longest was the costume and deportment of the ladies. A few were in good taste; others aimed at a greater variety of beautiful colors than the fair have, up to this date, succeeded in combining, without inflicting more pain on the beholders, than a beneficent Creator — so far as we can judge by His own system of color — intended the cultivated eye to suffer. Example — as the old writers used to say — one lady fired the air in primrose satin, with red velvet trimming. This mild mixture reappeared on her head in a primrose hat with a red feather. A gold chain, so big that it would have done for a felon instead of a fool, encircled her neck, and was weighted with innumerable lockets, which in size and inventive taste resembled a poached egg, and betrayed the insular goldsmith. A train three yards long completed this gorgeous figure. She had commenced life a shrimp-girl, and pushed a dredge before her, instead of pulling a silken besom after her. Another stately queen (with an "a") heated the atmosphere with a burnous of that color the French

call *flamme d'enfer*, and cooled it with a green bonnet. A third appeared to have been struck with the beauty of a painter's palette, and the skill with which its colors mix before the brush spoils them. Green body, violet skirts, rose-colored trimmings, purple sleeves, light-green boots, lavender gloves. A shawl all gauze and gold, flounced like a petticoat; a bonnet so small, and red feather so enormous and all-predominant, that a peacock seemed to be sitting on a hedge-sparrow's nest.

Zoe suspected these polychromatic ladies at a glance, and observed their manners in a mistrustful spirit, carefully. She was little surprised, though a good deal shocked, to find that some of them seemed familiar, and almost jocular, with the croupiers; and, that, although they did not talk loud, being kept in order by the general etiquette, they rustled, and fidgeted, and played in a devil-may-care sort of manner: this was in great measure accounted for by the circumstance that they were losing other people's money: at all events, they often turned their heads over their shoulders, and applied for fresh funds to their male companions.

Zoe blushed at all this, and said to Vizard, "I should like to see the other rooms." She whispered to Miss Maitland, "Surely they are not very select in this one."

"Lead on," said Vizard; "that is the way."

Fanny had not parted with his arm all this time. As they followed the others, he said, "But she will find it is all the same thing."

Fanny laughed in his face. "Don't you *see?* C'est la chasse au Severne qui commence."

"En voila un Sévère," replied he.

She was mute. She had not learned that sort of French in her finishing school. I forgive it.

The next room was the same thing over again.

Zoe stood a moment and drank everything in, then

turned to Vizard, blushed, and said, "May we play a little now?"

"Why, of course."

"Fanny!"

"No; you begin, dear. We will stand by and wish you success."

"You are a coward," said Zoe, loftily; and went to the table with more changes of color than veteran lancers betray in charging infantry. It was the *roulette* table she chose. That seems a law of her sex. The true solution is not so profound as some that have been offered. It is this: *trente et quarante* is not only unintelligible, but uninteresting. At *roulette* there is a pictorial object and dramatic incident; the board, the turning of the *moulinet*, and the swift revolutions of an ivory ball, its lowered speed, its irregular bounds, and its final settlement in one of the many holes, numbered and colored. Here the female understanding sees something it can grasp, and, above all, the female eye catches something pictorial and amusing outside the loss or gain; and so she goes, by her nature, to *roulette*, which is a greater swindle than the other.

Zoe staked five pounds on No. 21, for an excellent reason; she was in her twenty-first year. The ball was so illogical as to go into No. 3, and she lost. She stood by her number, and lost again. She lost thirteen times in succession.

The fourteenth time the ball rolled into 21, and the croupier handed her thirty-five times her stake, and a lot more for color.

Her eye flashed, and her cheek flushed, and I suppose she was tempted to bet more heavily, for she said, "No; that will never happen to me again, I know:" and she arose, the richer by several napoleons, and said, "Now let us go to another."

"Humph!" said Vizard. "What an extraordinary girl! She will give the devil more trouble than most of of you. Here's precocious prudence."

Fanny laughed in his face. "C'est la chasse qui recommence," said she.

I ought to explain that when she was in England, she did not interlard her discourse with French scraps. She was not so ill-bred. But abroad she had got into a way of it, through being often compelled to speak French.

Vizard appreciated the sagacity of the remark, but he did not like the lady any the better for it. He meditated in silence. He remembered that, when they were in the garden, Zoe had hung behind, and interpreted Fanny ill-naturedly; and here was Fanny at the same game, literally backbiting, or back-nibbling at all events. Said he to himself, "And these two are friends! female friends." And he nursed his misogyny in silence.

They came into a very noble room, the largest of all, with enormous mirrors down to the ground, and a ceiling blazing with gold, and the air glittering with lustres. Two very large tables, and a distinguished company at each, especially at the *trente et quarante.*

Before our little party had taken six steps into the room, Zoe stood like a pointer; and Fanny backed. Should these terms seem disrespectful, let Fanny bear the blame. It is her application of the word "chasse" that drew down the simile.

Yes, there sat Ned Severne, talking familiarly to Joseph Ashmead, and preparing to "put the pot on," as he called it.

Now Zoe was so far gone, that the very sight of Severne was a balsam to her. She had a little bone to pick with him; and, when he was out of sight, the bone seemed pretty large. But when she saw his adorable face, unconscious, as it seemed, of wrong, the bone faded, and the face shone.

Her own face cleared at the sight of him: she turned back to Fanny and Vizard, arch and smiling, and put her finger to her mouth, as much as to say, "Let us have some fun. We have caught our truant: let us watch him, unseen, a little, before we burst on him."

Vizard enjoyed this, and encouraged her with a nod.

The consequence was that Zoe dropped Miss Maitland's arm, who took that opportunity to turn up her nose, — and began to creep up like a young cat after a bird; taking a step, and then pausing; then another step, and a long pause; and still with her eye fixed on Severne. He did not see her, nor her companions, partly because they were not in front of him, but approaching at a sharp angle, and also because he was just then beginning to bet heavily on his system. By this means two progressive events went on contemporaneously: the arch but cat-like advance of Zoe, with pauses, and the betting of Severne, in which he gave himself the benefit of his system.

Noir having been the last to win, he went against the alternation, and put fifty pounds on *noir*. Red won. Then, true to his system, he doubled on the winning color. A hundred pounds on red. Black won. He doubled on black, and red won; and there was four hundred pounds of his five hundred pounds gone in five minutes.

On this proof that the likeliest thing to happen — viz., alternation of the color — does *sometimes* happen, Severne lost heart.

He turned to Ashmead, with all the superstition of a gambler. "For God's sake, bet for me!" said he. He clutched his own hair convulsively, in a struggle with his mania, and prevailed so far as to thrust fifty pounds into his own pocket, to live on, and gave Ashmead five tens.

"Well, but," said Ashmead, "you must tell me what to do."

"No, no. Bet your own way, for *me.*"

He had hardly uttered these words, when he seemed to glare across the table at the great mirror, and, suddenly putting his handkerchief to his mouth, he made a bolt sideways, plunged amidst the by-standers, and emerged only to dash into a room at the side.

As he disappeared, a lady came slowly and pensively forward from the outer door; lifted her eyes, as she neared the table, saw a vacant chair, and glided into it, revealing, to Zoe Vizard and her party, a noble face, not so splendid and animated as on the stage, for its expression was slumbering; still it was the face of Ina Klosking.

No transformation trick was ever done more neatly and smoothly than this, in which, nevertheless, the performers acted without concert.

Severne fled out, and the Klosking came slowly in; yet no one had time to take the seat, she glided into it so soon after Severne had vacated it.

Zoe Vizard and her friends stared after the flying Severne; then stared at the new-comer; and then turned round and stared at each other, in mutual amazement and inquiry.

What was the meaning of this double incident, that resembled a conjuror's trick?

Having looked at her companions, and seen only her own surprise reflected, Zoe Vizard fixed her eyes, like burning-glasses, upon Ina Klosking.

Then that lady thickened the mystery. She seemed very familiar with the man Severne had been so familiar with.

That man contributed his share to the multiplying mystery. He had a muddy complexion, hair the color of dirt, a long nose, a hatchet face, mean little eyes, and was evidently not a gentleman: he wore a brown velveteen shooting-coat, with a magenta tie that gave Zoe a

pain in the eye. She had already felt sorry to see her Severne was acquainted with such a man; he seemed to her the *ne plus ultra* of vulgarity; and now, behold, the artist, the woman she had so admired, was equally familiar with the same objectionable person.

To appreciate the hopeless puzzle of Zoe Vizard, the reader must be on his guard against his own knowledge. *He* knows that Severne and Ashmead were two Bohemians, who had struck up acquaintance, all in a minute, that very evening. But Zoe had not this knowledge, and she could not possibly divine it. The whole thing was presented to her senses thus — a vulgar man, with a brown velveteen shooting-coat, and a red-hot tie, was a mutual friend of the gentlemanly Severne and the dignified Klosking. Severne left the mutual friend; Mademoiselle Klosking joined the mutual friend; and there she sat, where Severne had sat a moment ago, by the side of their mutual friend.

All manner of thoughts and surmises thronged upon Zoe Vizard; but each way of accounting for the mystery contradicted some plain fact or other: so she was driven at last to a woman's remedy. She would wait, and watch. Severne would probably come back, and somehow furnish the key; meantime, her eye was not likely to leave the Klosking, nor her ear to miss a syllable the Klosking might utter.

She whispered to Vizard, in a very peculiar tone, "I will play at this table," and stepped up to it, with the word.

The duration of such beauty as Zoe's is proverbially limited; but the limit to its power, while it does last, has not yet been discovered. It is a fact that, as soon as she came close to the table, two male gamblers looked up, saw her, wondered at her, and actually jumped up and offered their seats. She made a courteous inclina-

tion of the head, and installed Miss Maitland in one seat, without reserve. She put a little gold on the table, and asked Miss Maitland, in a whisper, to play for her. She herself had neither eye nor ear, except for Ina Klosking. That lady was having a discussion, *sotto voce*, with Ashmead; and, if she had been one of your mumblers, whose name is legion, even Zoe's swift ear could have caught little or nothing. But when a voice has volume, and the great habit of articulation has been brought to perfection, the words travel surprisingly.

Zoe heard the lady say to Ashmead, scarcely above her breath, "Well, but if he requested you to bet for him, how can he blame you?"

Zoe could not catch Ashmead's reply, but it was accompanied by a shake of the head; so she understood him to object.

Then, after a little more discussion, Ina Klosking said, "What money have you of mine?"

Ashmead produced some notes.

"Very well," said the Klosking. "Now, I shall take my twenty-five pounds, and twenty-five pounds of his, and play. When he returns, we shall, at all events, have twenty-five pounds safe for him. I take the responsibility."

"Oh!" thought Zoe, "then he *is* coming back. Ah, I shall see what all this means." She felt sick at heart.

Zoe Vizard was on the other side, but not opposite Mademoiselle Klosking; she was considerably to the right hand, and, as the new-comer was much occupied, just at first, with Ashmead, who sat on her left, Zoe had time to dissect her, which she did without mercy. Well, her costume was beautifully made, and fitted on a symmetrical figure; but as to color, it was neutral — a warm French gray — and neither courted admiration nor risked censure; it was unpretending. Her lace collar was

valuable, but not striking. Her hair was beautiful, both in gloss and color, and beautifully but neatly arranged. Her gloves and wristbands were perfect.

As every woman aims at appearance, openly or secretly, and every other woman knows she does, Zoe did not look at this meek dress with male simplicity, unsuspicious of design, but asked herself what was the leading motive; and the question was no sooner asked than answered. "She has dressed for her golden hair and her white throat. Her hair, her deep gray eyes, and her skin are just like a flower: she has dressed herself as the modest stalk. She is an artist."

At the same table were a Russian princess, an English countess, and a Bavarian duchess, all well dressed, upon the whole; but their dresses showed off their dresses; the Klosking's showed off herself. And there was a native dignity, and, above all, a wonderful seemliness about the Klosking, that inspired respect. Dress and deportment were all of a piece — decent and deep.

While Zoe was picking her to pieces, Ina, having settled matters with Ashmead, looked up, and, of course, took in every other woman, who was in sight, at a single sweep. She recognized Zoe directly, with a flush of pleasure. A sweet, bright expression broke over her face, and she bowed to her with a respectful cordiality that was captivating. Zoe yielded to the charm of manner, and bowed and smiled in return, though, till that moment, she had been knitting her black brows at her in wonder and vague suspicion.

Ina trifled with her game, at first. Ashmead was still talking to her of the young swell and his system. He explained it to her, and how it had failed. "Not but what," said he, "there is a great deal in it most evenings. But to-day there are no runs; it is all turn and turn about. If it would rain, now, you would see a change."

"Well," said Ina, "I will bet a few pounds on red, then on black, till these runs begin."

During the above conversation, of which Zoe caught little, because Ashmead was the chief speaker, she cast her eyes all round the table, and saw a curious assemblage of figures.

There was a solemn Turk melting his piastres with admirable gravity; there was the Russian princess; and there was a lady, dressed in loud, incongruous colors, such as once drew from a horrified *modiste* the cry, "Ah, Dieu! quelle immoralité!" and that's a fact. There was a Popish priest, looking sheepish as he staked his silver; and an Anglican rector, betting fivers, and as *nonchalant*, in the blest absence of his flock, and the Baptist minister, as if he was playing at whist with the old Bishop of Norwich, who played a nightly rubber in my father's day — and a very bad one. There was a French count, nearly six feet high, to whom the word "old" would have been unjust; he was antique, and had turned into bones and leather; but the hair on that dilapidated trunk was its own; and Zoe preferred him much to the lusty old English beau beside him, with ivory teeth and ebon locks that cost a pretty penny.

There was a fat, livid Neapolitan, betting heavily; there was a creole lady, with a fine oval face, rather sallow, and eyes and hair as black as Zoe's own. Indeed, the creole excelled her by the addition of a little black fringe upon her upper lip, that, prejudice apart, became her very well. Her front hair was confined by two gold threads, a little way apart, on which were fixed a singular ornament, the vivid eyes of a peacock's tail set close together all round. It was glorious, regal. The hussy should have been the Queen of Sheba, receiving Solomon, and showing her peacock's eyes against his crown jewels. Like the lilies of the field, these products of nature are bad to beat, as we say on Yorkshire turf.

Indeed, that frontlet was so beautiful and well placed, it drew forth glances of marked disdain from every lady within sight of it, Zoe excepted. She was placable. This was a lesson in color; and she managed to forgive the teacher, in consideration of the lesson.

Amidst the gaudier birds there was a dove — a young lady, well dressed, with Quaker-like simplicity, in gray silk dress, with no trimmings, a white silk bonnet and veil. Her face was full of virtues. Meeting her elsewhere, you would say, "That is a good wife, a good daughter, and the making of a good mother." Her expression at the table was thoughtful and a little anxious; but every now and then she turned her head to look for her husband, and gave him so sweet a smile of conjugal sympathy and affection as made Zoe almost pray they might win. The husband was an officer, a veteran, with grizzled hair and mustache, a colonel who had commanded a brigade in action, but could only love and spoil his wife. He ought to have been her father, her friend, her commander, and marched her out of that "Curse-all" to the top of Cader Idris, if need was. Instead of that, he stood behind her chair, like a lackey, all day; for this dove was as desperate a gambler as any in Europe; it was not that she bet very heavily, but that she bet every day and all day. She began in the afternoon, and played till midnight, if there was a table going. She knew no day of religion — no day of rest. She won and she lost. Her own fortune and her husband's stood the money drain; but how about the golden hours? She was losing her youth, and wasting her soul. Yet the Administration gave her a warning; they did not allow the irretrievable hours to be stolen from her with a noiseless hand. At All Souls' College, Oxford, in the first quadrangle, grave, thoughtful men raised to the top story, two hundred years ago, a grand sun-dial, the

largest, perhaps, and noblest in the kingdom. They set it on the face of the Quad, and wrote over the long pointers, in large letters of gold, these words, "Pereunt et imputantur," which refer to the hours indicated below, and mean, literally, "They perish, and go down to our account;" but really imply a little more; viz., that "they are wasted, and go to our debit." These are true words and big words, bigger than any Royal Commissioner has uttered up to date, and reach the mind through the senses, and have warned the scholars of many a generation not to throw away the seed-time of their youth, which never can come twice to any man. Well, the Administration of the Kursaal conveyed to that lost English dove, and others, a note of warning, which struck the senses, as does the immortal warning emblazoned on the fair brow of that beautiful college; only, in the Kursaal the warning struck the ear, not the eye. They provided French clocks with a singularly clear metallic striking tick; their blows upon the life of Time rang sharp above the chant, the mumble, and the jingle. These clocks seemed to cry aloud, and say of the hours, whose waste they recorded, "Pere-unt-et-impu-tantur, pere-unt-et-impu-tantur."

Reckless of this protest, the waves of play rolled on, and, ere long, sucked all our characters, but Vizard, into the vortex. Zoe hazarded a sovereign on red, and won; then two on black, and won; then four on red, and won. She was launched, and Fanny too. They got excited, and bet higher; the croupiers pelted them with golden coins, and they began to pant and flush, and their eyes to gleam. The old gamblers' eyes seem to have lost their power — they have grown fishy; but the eyes of these female novices were a sight. Fanny's, being light gray, gleamed like a panther's whose prey is within leap. Zoe's dark orbs could not resemble any wild beast's;

but they glowed with unholy fire: and, indeed, all down the table was now seen that which no painter can convey — for his beautiful but contracted art confines him to a moment of time — and writers have strangely neglected to notice; viz., *the progress of the countenance* under play. Many of the masks melted as if they had been of wax, and the natural expressions forced their way; some got flushed with triumph, others wild and haggard with their losses. One ghastly glaring loser sat quite quiet, when his all was gone; but clenched his hands so that the nails ran into the flesh, and blood trickled: discovering which, a friend dragged him off like something dead. Nobody minded.

The fat old beau got worried by his teeth, and pulled them out in a pet, and pocketed them.

Miss Maitland, who had begun with her gray hair in neat little curls, deranged one so with convulsive hand, that it came all down her cheek, and looked most rakish and unbecoming. Even Zoe and Fanny had turned from lambs to leopardesses. Patches of red on each cheek, and eyes like red-hot coals.

The colors had begun to run, and at first the players lost largely to the bank, with one exception.

Ina Klosking discerned the change, and backed the winning color, then doubled on it twice. She did this so luckily three or four times that, though her single stake was, at first, only forty pounds, gold seemed to grow around her; and even notes to rise and make a cushion. She, too, was excited, though not openly; her gloves were off, and her own lovely hand, the whitest in the room, placed the stakes. You might see a red spot on her cheek-bone, and a strange glint in her deep eye; but she could not do anything that was not seemly.

She played calmly, boldly, on the system that had cleared out Ned Severne, and she won heavily, because she was in luck. It was her hour and her vein.

By this time Zoe and Fanny were cleaned out; and looked in amazement at the Klosking, and wondered how she did it.

Miss Maitland, at her last sovereign, began to lean on the victorious Klosking, and bet as she did: her pile increased. The dove caught sight of her game, and backed her luck. The creole backed her heavily.

Presently there was an extraordinary run on black. Numbers were caught. The Klosking won three times, and lost three times: but the bets she won were double bets, and those she lost were single.

Then came a *refait*, and the bank swept off half her stake; but even here she was lucky. She had only forty pounds on.

By-and-by came the event of the night. Black had, for some time, appeared to rule the roost, and thrust red off the table; and the Klosking lost two hundred pounds.

The Klosking put two hundred pounds on red; it won. She doubled: red won. She left the four hundred pounds — the maximum. There was a dead silence. The creole lady put the maximum on red, four hundred pounds. Red won. Ina Klosking looked a little pale: but, driven by some unaccountable impulse, she played the maximum again. So did the creole. Red won. The automata chucked twelve hundred pounds to the Klosking, and eight hundred pounds to the other lady. Ina betted forty pounds on black. Red won again. She put two hundred pounds on black: black won. She doubled: black won again. She played the maximum: black won. Maximum again: black won.

The creole and others stood with her in that last run, and the money was chucked. But the settlement was followed by a short whisper, and a croupier, in a voice as mechanical as ever, chanted that the sum set apart for that table was exhausted for that day.

The Klosking and her backers had broken the bank.

CHAPTER X.

THERE was a buzzing and a thronging round the victorious player.

Ina rose, and, with a delicate movement of her milk-white hand, turned the mountain of gold and column of notes towards Ashmead. "Make haste, please," she whispered; then put on her gloves deliberately, while Ashmead shoved the gold and the notes anyhow into the inner pockets of his shooting-jacket, and buttoned it well up.

"*Allons*," said she calmly, and took his arm: but, as she moved away, she saw Zoe Vizard passing on the other side of the table. Their eyes met: she dropped Ashmead's arm, and made her a sweeping courtesy full of polite consideration, and a sort of courteous respect for the person saluted, coupled with a certain dignity; and then she looked wistfully at her a moment. I believe she would have spoken to her if she had been alone; but Miss Maitland and Fanny Dover had, both of them, a trick of putting on *noli me tangere* faces amongst strangers. It did not mean much; it is an unfortunate English habit: but it repels foreigners; they neither do it nor understand it.

Those two faces, not downright forbidding, but uninviting, turned the scale; and the Klosking, who was not a forward woman, did not yield to her inclination and speak to Zoe. She took Ashmead's arm again, and moved away.

Then Zoe turned back and beckoned Vizard. He joined her. "There she is," said Zoe: "shall I speak to her?"

Would you believe it? He thought a moment, and then said gloomily, "Well? — no. Half cured now. Seen the lover in time." So that opportunity was frittered away.

Before the English party left the Kursaal, Zoe asked, timidly, if they ought not to make some inquiry about Mr. Severne. He had been taken ill again.

"Ay, taken ill, and gone to be cured at another table," said Vizard, ironically. "I'll make the tour, and collar him."

He went off in a hurry: Miss Maitland faced a glass, and proceeded to arrange her curl.

Fanny, though she had offered no opposition to Vizard's going, now seized Zoe's arm with unusual energy, and almost dragged her aside. "The idea of sending Harrington on that fool's errand!" said she, peevishly. "Why, Zoe! where are your eyes?"

Zoe showed her by opening them wide. "What *do* you mean?"

"What — do — I — mean? No matter. Mr. Severne is not in this building, and you know it."

"How can I know? All so mysterious," faltered Zoe. "How do *you* know?"

"Because — there — least said is soonest mended."

"Fanny, you are older than me, and ever so much cleverer. Tell me, or you are not my friend."

"Wait till you get home, then. Here he is."

Vizard told them he had been through all the rooms: the only chance, now, was the dining-room. "No," said Fanny, "we wish to get home: we are rather tired."

They went to the rail; and, at first, Vizard was rather talkative, making his comments on the players; but the ladies were taciturn, and brought him to a stand: "Ah," thought he, "nothing interests them now; Adonis is not here." So he retired within himself.

When they reached the "Russie," he ordered a *petit souper* in an hour, and invited the ladies. Meantime they retired; Miss Maitland to her room, and Fanny, with Zoe, to hers. By this time Miss Dover had lost her alacrity, and would, I verily believe, have shunned a *tête-à-tête* if she could; but there was a slight paleness in Zoe's cheek, and a compression of the lips, which told her plainly that young lady meant to have it out with her. They both knew so well what was coming, that Zoe merely waved her to a chair, and leaned herself against the bed, and said, "Now, Fanny." So Fanny was brought to bay.

"Dear me," said she, piteously, "I don't know what to do, between you and Aunt Maitland. If I say all I think, I suppose you will hate me; and, if I don't, I shall be told I'm wicked, and don't warn an orphan girl. She flew at me like a bull-dog before your brother; she said I was twenty-five; and I only own to twenty-three. And after all, what could I say? for I do feel I ought to give you the benefit of my experience, and make myself as disagreeable as *she* does. And I *have* given you a hint, and a pretty broad one; but you want such plain speaking."

"I do," said Zoe. "So please speak plainly — if you can."

"Ah, you *say* that."

"And I mean it. Never mind consequences; tell me the truth."

"Like a man, eh? and get hated."

"Men are well worth imitating, in some things. Tell me the truth, pleasant or not; and I shall always respect you."

"Bother respect. I am like the rest of us; I want to be loved a little bit. But there — I'm in for it. I have said too much, or too little. I know that. Well, Zoe, the long and the short is — you have a rival."

Zoe turned rather pale, but was not so much shaken as Fanny expected.

She received the blow in silence. But, after a while, she said, with some firmness, "Mademoiselle Klosking?"

"Oh, you are not quite blind, then."

"And pray which does he prefer?" asked Zoe, a little proudly.

"It is plain he likes you the best. But why does he fear her so? This is where you seem all in the dark. He flew out of the opera, lest she should see him."

"Oh! Absurd!"

"He cut you and Vizard, rather than call upon her with you."

"And so he did."

"He flew from the gaming-table the moment she entered the room."

"Behind him. She came in behind him."

"There was a large mirror in front of him."

"Oh, Fanny! oh!" and Zoe clasped her hands, piteously. But she recovered herself, and said, "After all, appearances are deceitful."

"Not so deceitful as men," said Fanny, sharply.

But Zoe clung to her straw. "Might not two things happen together? He is subject to bleeding at the nose. It is strange it should occur twice so: but it is possible."

"Zoe," said Fanny, gravely, "he is not subject to bleeding at the nose."

"Oh! *then* — but how can you know that? what right have you to say that?"

"I'll show you," said Fanny, and left the room.

She soon came back, holding something behind her back. Even at the last moment she was half unwilling. However, she looked down, and said, in a very peculiar tone, "Here is the handkerchief he put before his face at the opera; there!" and she threw it into Zoe's lap.

Zoe's nature revolted against evidence so obtained. She did not even take up the handkerchief. "What!" she cried: "you took it out of his pocket?"

"No."

"Then you have been in his room, and got it."

"*Nothing of the kind!* I sent Rosa."

"My maid!"

"Mine, for that job. I gave her a half-a-crown, to borrow it for a pattern."

Zoe seized the handkerchief, and ran her eye over it in a moment. There was no trace of blood on it, and there were his initials, "E. S." in the corner. Her woman's eye fastened instantly on these. "Silk?" said she, and held it up to the light. "No. Hair! — golden hair. It is *hers!*" And she flung the handkerchief from her, as if it was a viper, and even when on the ground eyed it with dilating orbs, and a hostile horror.

"La!" said Fanny; "fancy that! You are not blind now. You have seen more than me. I made sure it was yellow silk."

But this frivolous speech never even entered Zoe's ear. She was too deeply shocked. She went, feebly, and sat down in a chair, and covered her face with her hands.

Fanny eyed her with pity. "There," said she, almost crying, "I never tell the truth but I bitterly repent it."

Zoe took no notice of this droll apophthegm. Her hands began to work. "What shall I do?" she said; "what shall I do?"

"Oh, don't go on like that, Zoe!" cried Fanny. "After all, it is you he prefers. He ran away from her."

"Ah, yes. But why? — why? What has he done?"

"Jilted her, I suppose. Aunt Maitland thinks he is after money: and, you know, you have got money."

"Have I nothing else?" said the proud beauty; and lifted her bowed head, for a moment.

"You have everything. But you should look things in the face. Is that singer an unattractive woman?"

"Oh, no; but she is not poor. Her kind of talent is paid enormously."

"That is true," said Fanny. "But perhaps she wastes it. She is a gambler, like himself."

"Let him go to her," said Zoe, wildly. "I will share no man's heart."

"He will never go to her unless — well, unless we tell him that she has broken the bank with his money."

"If you think so badly of him, tell him then, and let him go. Oh, I am wretched! I am wretched!" She lifted her hands in despair, and began to cry and sob bitterly.

Fanny was melted at her distress, and kneeled to her, and cried with her.

Not being a girl of steady principle, she went round with the wind. "Dear Zoe," said she: "it is deeper than I thought. La! if you love him, why torment yourself?"

"No," said Zoe; "it is deceit and mystery that torment me. Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?"

Fanny interpreted this vague exclamation of sorrow, as asking advice, and said, "I dare not advise you; I can only tell you what I should do in your place. I should make up my mind at once, whether I loved the man, or only liked him. If I only liked him, I would turn him up at once."

"Turn him up? what is that?"

"Turn him off, then. If I loved him, I would not let any other woman have the least little bit of a chance to get him. For instance, I would not let him know this old sweetheart of his has won three thousand pounds at least, for I noted her winnings. Diamond cut diamond, my dear. He is concealing from you something or

other about him and this Klosking; hide you this one little thing about the Klosking from him — till you get my gentleman safe to England."

"And this is love! I call it warfare."

"And love is warfare, three times out of four. Any way, it is for you to decide, Zoe. I do wish you had never seen the man. He is not what he seems. He is a poor adventurer, and a bundle of deceit."

"You are very hard on him. You don't know all."

"No, nor a quarter; and you know less. There, dear, dry your eyes and fight against it. After all, you know, you are mistress of the situation. I'll settle it for you, which way you like."

"You will? Oh, Fanny, you are very good!"

"Say indulgent, please. I'm not good, and never will be, if *I can possibly help.* I despise good people; they are as weak as water. But I do like you, Zoe Vizard, better than any other woman in the world. That is not saying very much; my taste is for men. I think them gods, and devils, compared with us; and I do admire gods and devils. No matter, dear. Kiss me, and say, 'Fanny, act for me,' and I'll do it."

Zoe kissed her, and then, by a truly virginal impulse, hid her burning face in her hands and said nothing at all.

Fanny gave her plenty of time, and then said, kindly, "Well, dear?"

Then Zoe murmured, scarce audibly, "Act — *as if* — I loved him."

And still she kept her face covered with her hands.

Fanny was anything but surprised at this conclusion of the struggle. She said, with a certain alacrity, "Very well, I will: so now bathe your eyes and come in to supper."

"No, no; please go and make an excuse for me."

"I shall do nothing of the kind. I won't be told by and by I have done wrong. I will do your business, but it shall be in your hearing. Then you can interfere, if you choose. Only you had better not put your word in, till you see what I am driving at."

With a little more encouragement, Zoe was prevailed on to sponge her tearful eyes, and compose herself and join Harrington at supper.

Miss Maitland soon retired, pleading fatigue and packing; and she had not been gone long, when Fanny gave her friend a glance and began upon Harrington.

"You are very fond of Mr. Severne, are you not?" said she.

"I am," said Vizard, stoutly preparing for battle. "You are not, perhaps."

Fanny laughed at this prompt pugnacity. "Oh, yes; I am," said she; "devoted. But he has a weakness, you must own. He is rather fond of gambling."

"He is, I am sorry to say. It is his one fault. Most of us have two or three."

"Don't you think it would be a pity if he was to refuse to go with us to-morrow? was to prefer to stay here and gamble?"

"No fear of that: he has given me his word of honor."

"Still I think it would be hardly safe to tempt him. If you go and tell him that friend of his won such a lot of money, he will want to stop; and, if he does not stop, he will go away miserable. You know they began betting with his money, though they went on with their own."

"Oh, did they? What was his own money?"

"How much was it, Zoe?"

"Fifty pounds."

"Well," said Vizard, "you must admit it is hard he should lose his own money. And yet I own I am most

anxious to get him away from this place. Indeed I have a project; I want him to rusticate a few months at our place, while I set my lawyer to look into his affairs and see if his estate cannot be cleared. I'll be bound the farms are underlet. What does the Admirable Crichton know about such trifles?"

Fanny looked at Zoe, whose color was rising high at all this. "Well," said she, "when you gentlemen fall in love *with each other*, you certainly are faithful creatures."

"Because we can count on fidelity in return," said Vizard. He thought a little and said, "Well, as to the other thing — you leave it to me. Let us understand one another. Nothing we saw at the gambling-table is to be mentioned by us?"

"No."

"Crichton is to be taken to England for his good?"

"Yes."

"And I am to be grateful to you for your co-operation in this?"

"You can, if you like."

"And you will secure an agreeable companion for the rest of the tour, eh? my diplomatic cousin, and my silent sister?"

"Yes; but it is too bad of you to see through a poor girl, and her little game, like that. I own he is a charming companion."

Fanny's cunning eyes twinkled, and Zoe blushed crimson to see her noble brother manipulated by this artful minx, and then flattered for his perspicacity.

From that moment a revulsion took place in her mind, and pride fought furiously with love — for a time.

This was soon made apparent to Fanny Dover. When they retired, Zoe looked very gloomy, so Fanny asked rather sharply, "Well, what is the matter now? didn't I do it cleverly?"

"Yes, yes, too cleverly. O Fanny, I begin to revolt against myself."

"This is nice," said Fanny. "Go on, dear. It is just what I ought to have expected. You were there. You had only to interfere. You didn't. And now you are discontented."

"Not with you. Spare me. You are not to blame; and I am very unhappy. I am losing my self-respect. Oh, if this goes on, I shall hate him."

"Yes, dear, for five minutes; and then love him double. Come, don't deceive yourself, and don't torment yourself. All your trouble, we shall leave it behind us to-morrow, and every hour will take us farther from it."

With this practical view of matters, she kissed Zoe, and hurried to bed.

But Zoe scarcely closed her eyes all night.

Severne did not reach the hotel till past eleven o'clock, and went straight to his own room.

HE HELD THE PHOTOGRAPH AT ARM'S LENGTH.

CHAPTER XI.

Ashmead accompanied Mademoiselle Klosking to her apartment. It was lighted, and the cloth laid for supper under the chandelier, a snow-white Hamburg damask. Ashmead took the winnings out of his pocket, and proudly piled the gold and crumpled notes in one prodigious mass upon the linen, that shone like satin, and made the gold look doubly inviting. Then he drew back and gloated on it. The Klosking, too, stood and eyed the pile of wealth with amazement and a certain reverence. "Let me count it," said Ashmead. He did so, and it came to four thousand nine hundred and eighty-one pounds, English money. "And to think," said he, "if you had taken my advice you would not have a penny of this!"

"I'll take your advice now," said she. "I will never gamble again."

"Well, take my advice and lock up the swag before a creature sees it. Homburg is full of thieves."

She complied, and took away the money in a napkin.

Ashmead called after her to know might he order supper.

"If you will be so kind."

Ashmead rejoiced at this unguarded permission, and ordered a supper that made Karl stare.

The Klosking returned in about half an hour, clad in a crisp *peignoir*.

Ashmead confronted her. "I have ordered a bottle of champagne," said he. Her answer surprised him. "You have done well. We must now begin to prove the truth of the old proverb, 'Ce que vient par la flûte s'en va au tambour.'"

At supper Mr. Ashmead was the chief drinker, and, by a natural consequence, the chief speaker; he held out brilliant prospects; he favored the Klosking with a discourse on advertising. No talent availed without it, — large posters, pictures, window-cards, etc., — but as her talent was superlative, he must now endeavor to keep up with it by invention in his line — the puff circumstantial, the puff poetic, the puff anecdotal, the puff controversial, all tending to blow the fame of the Klosking in every eye, and ring it in every ear. "You take my advice," said he, "and devote this money, every penny of it, to publicity. Don't you touch a single shiner for anything that does not return a hundred per cent. Publicity does, when the article is prime."

"You forget," said she, "this money does not all belong to me. Another can claim half, — the gentleman with whom we are in partnership."

Ashmead looked literally blue. "Nonsense!" said he roughly; "he can only claim his fifty pounds."

"Nay, my friend. I took two equal sums, — one was his, one mine."

"That has nothing to do with it. He told me to bet for him. I didn't; and I shall take him back his fifty pounds, and say so. I know where to find him."

"Where?"

"That is my business. Don't you go mad now, and break my heart."

"Well, my friend, we will talk of it to-morrow morning. It certainly is not very clear; and perhaps, after I have prayed and slept, I may see more plainly what is right."

Ashmead observed she was pale, and asked her, with concern, if she was ill.

"No, not ill," said she, "but worn out. My friend, I knew not at the time how great was my excitement; but

now I am conscious that this afternoon I have lived a week. My very knees give way under me."

Upon this admission Ashmead hurried her to bed.

She slept soundly for some hours; but, having once awakened, she fell into a half sleepless state, and was full of dreams and fancies. These preyed on her so, that she rose and despatched a servant to Ashmead, with a line in pencil, begging him to take an early breakfast with her, at nine o'clock.

As soon as ever he came, she began upon the topic of last night. She had thought it over, and said frankly, she was not without hopes the gentleman, if he was really a gentleman, might be contented with something less than half. But she really did not see how she could refuse him some share of her winnings, should he demand it. "Think of it," said she. "The poor man loses — four hundred pounds, I think you said. Then he says, 'Bet you for me,' and goes away, trusting to your honor. His luck changes in my hands. Is he to lose all when he loses, and win nothing when he wins, merely because I am so fortunate as to win much? However, we shall hear what *he* says. You gave him your address."

"I said I was at the 'Golden Star,'" growled Ashmead, in a tone that plainly showed he was vexed with himself for being so communicative.

"Then he will pay us a visit as soon as he hears; so I need give myself no further trouble."

"Why should you? Wait till he comes," said crafty Ashmead.

Ina Klosking colored. She felt her friend was tempting her, and felt she was not quite beyond the power of temptation.

"What was he like?" said she to turn the conversation.

"The handsomest young fellow I ever saw."

"Young, of course?"

"Yes, quite a boy; at least he looked a boy. To be sure his talk was not like a boy's; very precocious, I should say."

"What a pity! to begin gambling so young!"

"Oh, he is all right; if he loses every farthing of his own he will marry money. Any woman would have him. You never saw such a curled darling."

"Dark or fair?"

"Fair. Pink and white, like a girl: a hand like a lady."

"Indeed! Fine eyes?"

"Splendid."

"What color?"

"I don't know. Lord bless you! a man does not examine another man's eyes, like you ladies. However, now I think of it, there was one curious thing I should know him by anywhere."

"And what was that?"

"Well, you see, his hair was brown, but just above the forehead he had one lock that was gold itself."

While he said this, the Klosking's face underwent the most rapid and striking changes, and at last she sat looking at him wildly.

It was some time before he noticed her, and then he was quite alarmed at her strange expression. "What is the matter?" said he. "Are you ill?"

"No, no, no; only a little — astonished. Such a thing as that is very rare."

"That it is. I never saw a case before."

"Not one, in all your life?" asked she, eagerly.

"Well, no; not that I remember."

"Excuse me a minute," said Ina Klosking, and went hurriedly from the room.

Ashmead thought her manner very strange, but concluded she was a little unhinged by yesterday's excite-

ment. Moreover, there faced him an omelet of enormous size, and savory. He thought this worthy to divide a man's attention even with a great creature's tantrums. He devoted himself to it, and it occupied him so agreeably, that he did not observe the conduct of Mademoiselle Klosking on her return. She placed three photographs softly on the table, not very far from him, and then resumed her seat; but her eye never left him: and she gave monosyllabic and almost impatient replies to everything he mumbled with his mouth full of omelet.

When he had done his omelet, he noticed the photographs. They were all colored. He took one up. It was an elderly woman, sweet, venerable, and fair-haired. He looked at Ina, and at the photograph, and said, "This is your mother."

"It is."

"It is angelic — as might be expected."

He took up another.

"This is your brother, I suppose. Stop. Hullo! — what is this? — Are my eyes making a fool of me?"

He held out the photograph at arm's length, and stared from it to her. "Why, madam," said he, in an awe-struck voice, "this is the gentleman — the player; I'd swear to him."

Ina started from her seat while he spoke. "Ah!" she cried, "I thought so — my Edward!" and sat down, trembling violently.

Ashmead ran to her, and sprinkled water in her face, for she seemed ready to faint: but she murmured, "No, no;" and soon the color rushed into her face, and she clasped her hands together, and cried, "I have found him!" and the storm of varying emotions ended in tears that gave her relief.

It was a long time before she spoke; but when she did, her spirit and her natural strength of character took the upper hand. "Where is he?" said she, firmly.

"He told me he was at the 'Russie.'"

"We will go there at once. When is the next train?"

Ashmead looked at his watch. "In ten minutes. We can hardly do it."

"Yes we can. Order a carriage this instant. I will be ready in one minute."

They caught the train, and started.

As they glided along, Ashmead begged her not to act too hurriedly, and expose herself to insult.

"Who will dare insult me?"

"Nobody, I hope. Still I cannot bear you to go into a strange hotel hunting this man. It is monstrous; but I'm afraid you will not be welcome. Something has just occurred to me; the reason he ran off so sudden was, he saw you coming. There was a mirror opposite. Ah, we need not have feared he would come back for his winnings. Idiot — villain!"

"You stab me to the heart," said Ina. "He ran away at sight of me? Ah, Jesu, pity me! What have I done to him?"

Honest Ashmead had much ado not to blubber at this patient cry of anguish, though the woman herself shed no tear just then. But his judgment was undimmed by passion, and he gave her the benefit. "Take my advice," said he, "and work it this way. Come in a close carriage to the side street that is nearest the 'Russie.' I'll go in to the hotel, and ask for him by his name — what is his name?"

"Mr. Edward Severne."

"And say that I was afraid to stake his money; but a friend of mine, that is a bold player, undertook it, and had a great run of luck. 'There is money owing you,'

says I, 'and my friend has brought it.' Then he is sure to come. You will have your veil down; I'll open the carriage-door, and tell him to jump in, and, when you have got him, you must make him hear reason. I'll give you a good chance — I'll shut the carriage-door."

CHAPTER XII.

Ina smiled at his ingenuity — her first smile that day. "You are indeed a friend," said she. "He fears reproaches; but, when he finds he is welcome, he will stay with me: and he shall have money to play with, and amuse himself how he likes. I kept too tight a rein on him, poor fellow; my good mother taught me prudence."

"Yes; but," said Ashmead, "you must promise me one thing, not to let him know how much money you have won, and not to go like a goose, and give him a lot at once. It never pays to part with power in this wicked world. You give him twenty pounds a day, to play with, whenever he is cleaned out. Then the money will last your time, and he will never leave you."

"Oh, how cold-hearted and wise you are!" said she. "But such a humiliating position for *him!*"

"Don't you be silly. You won't keep him any other way."

"I will be as wise as I can," sighed Ina. "I have had a bitter lesson. Only bring him to me, and then, who knows? I am a change: my love may revive his, and none of these pitiable precautions may be needed. They would lower us both."

Ashmead groaned aloud. "I see," said he. "He'll soon clean you out. Ah, well! he can't rob you of your voice, and he can't rob you of your Ashmead."

They soon reached Frankfort. Ashmead put her into a carriage as agreed, and went to the "Russie."

Ina sat, with her veil down, in the carriage, and waited Ashmead's return with Severne. He was a long time

coming. She began to doubt, and then to fear, and wonder why he was so long.

At last he came in sight.

He was alone.

As he drew nearer, she saw his face was thoroughly downcast.

"My dear friend," he faltered, "you are out of luck to-day."

"He will not come with you?"

"Oh, he would come fast enough, if he was there; but he is gone."

"Gone! To Homburg?"

"No. Unfortunately he is gone to England. Went off by the fast train, an hour ago."

Ina fell back, in silence, just as if she had been struck in the face.

"He is travelling with an English family, and they have gone straight home. Here are their names. I looked in the visitors' book, and talked to the servant, and all. Mr. Vizard, Miss Vizard" —

"Vizard?"

"Yes — Miss Maitland, Miss Dover. See, I wrote them all down."

"Oh, I am unfortunate! Why was I ever born?"

"Don't say that, don't say that. It is annoying: but we shall be able to trace him now; and, besides, I see other ways of getting hold of him."

Ina broke in upon his talk; "Take me to the nearest church," she cried. "Man's words are vain. Ah, Jesu, let me cry to thee!"

He took her to the nearest church. She went in, and prayed for full two hours. She came out pale and listless, and Ashmead got her home how he could. Her very body seemed all crushed and limp. Ashmead left her, sad at heart himself.

So long as she was in sight, Ashmead could think only of her misery. But the moment she was out of sight, he remembered the theatre. She was announced for Rosina that very night. He saw trouble of all sorts before him. He ran to the theatre, in great alarm, and told the manager she was taken very ill. He must change the bill.

"Impossible!" was the reply. "If she can't sing, I close."

Ashmead went back to the "Star."

Ina was in her bedroom.

He sent in a line: "Can you sing to-night? If not, he says he must close."

The reply came back in rather a trembling hand: "I suffer too much by falsehood to break faith myself. I shall pray till night; and then I shall sing. If I die on the stage, all the better for me."

Was not this a great soul?

CHAPTER XIII.

That same morning, our English party snatched a hasty breakfast in travelling attire. Severne was not there; but sent word to Vizard he should be there in time.

This filled the cup: Zoe's wounded pride had been rising higher and higher all the night, and she came down rather pale, from broken rest, and sternly resolved. She had a few serious words with Fanny, and sketched her out a little map of conduct, which showed that she had thought the matter well over.

But her plan bade fair to be deranged: Severne was not at the station: then came a change: Zoe was restless, and cast anxious glances.

But at the second bell he darted into the carriage, as if he had just despatched some wonderful business to get there in time. Whilst the train was starting, he busied himself in arranging his things; but, once started, he put on his sunny look, and prepared to be, as usual, the life and soul of the party.

But for once, he met a frost. Zoe was wrapped in impenetrable *hauteur*, and Fanny in polite indifference. Never was loss of favor more ably marked, without the least ill-breeding, and no good handle given to seek an explanation.

No doubt a straightforward man, with justice on his side, would have asked them plump, whether he had been so unfortunate as to offend, and how; and this was what Zoe secretly wished, however she might seem to repel it. But Severne was too crafty for that. He had learned the art of waiting.

After a few efforts at conversation, and smooth rebuffs, he put on a surprised, mortified, and sorrowful air, and awaited the attack, which he felt would come soon or late.

This skilful inertia baffled the fair, in a man; in a woman, they might have expected it; and, after a few hours, Zoe's patience began to wear out.

The train stopped for twenty minutes, and, even while they were snatching a little refreshment, the dark locks and the blond came very close together; and Zoe, exasperated by her own wounded pride and the sullen torpor of her lover, gave Fanny fresh instructions, which nobody was better qualified to carry out than that young lady, as nobody was better able to baffle female strategy than the gentleman.

This time, however, the ladies had certain advantages, to balance his subtlety, and his habit of stating anything true or false, that suited his immediate purpose.

They opened very cat-like. Fanny affected to be outgrowing her ill-humor, and volunteered a civil word or two to Severne. Thereupon Zoe turned sharply away from Fanny, as if she disapproved her conduct: and took a book. This was pretty sly, and done, I suppose, to remove all idea of concert between the fair assailants; whereas it was a secret signal for the concert to come into operation, it being Fanny's part to play upon Severne, and Zoe's to watch, from her corner, every lineament of his face under fire.

"By the way, Mr. Severne," said Fanny, apropos of a church on a hill they were admiring, "did you get your winnings?"

"My winnings! You are sarcastical."

"Am I? Really I did not intend to be."

"No, no; forgive me; but that did seem a little cruel. Miss Dover, I was a heavy loser."

"Not whilst we were there. The lady and gentleman, who played with your money, won, oh, such a deal!"

"The devil they did!"

"Yes: did you not stay behind, last night, to get it? We never saw you at the 'Russie.'"

"I was very ill."

"Bleeding at the nose?"

"No; that always relieves me when it comes. I am subject to fainting fits: once I lay insensible so long they were going to bury me. Now do pray tell me what makes you fancy anybody won a lot with my money."

"Well, I will. You know you left fifty pounds for a friend to bet with."

Severne stared; but was too eager for information, to question her how she knew this. "Yes, I did," said he.

"And you really don't know what followed?"

"Good heavens! how can I?"

"Well, then, as you ran out — to faint, Mademoiselle Klosking came in, just as she did at the opera, you know, the time before when you ran out — to bleed. She slipped into your chair the very moment you left it; and your friend with the flaming necktie told her you had set him to bet with your money. By-the-by, Mr. Severne, how on earth do you and Mademoiselle Klosking, who have both so much taste in dress, come to have a mutual friend, vulgarity in person, with a velveteen coat and an impossible necktie?"

"What are you talking about, Miss Dover? I do just know Mademoiselle Klosking; I met her in society in Vienna, two years ago; but that cad I commissioned to bet for me, I never saw before in my life. You are keeping me on tenter-hooks. My money — my money — my money! If you have a heart in your bosom, tell me what became of my money."

He was violent for the first time since they had known him, and his eyes flashed fire.

"Well," said Fanny, beginning to be puzzled and rather frightened, "this man, who you *say* was a new acquaintance" —

"Whom I *say?* Do you mean to tell me I am a liar?" He fumbled eagerly in his breast pocket, and produced a card. "There," said he, "this is the card he gave me, 'Mr. Joseph Ashmead.' Now may this train dash over the next viaduct, and take you and Miss Vizard to heaven, and me to hell, if ever I saw Mr. Joseph Ashmead's face before. THE MONEY! — THE MONEY!"

He uttered this furiously; and it is a curious fact; but Zoe turned red, and Fanny pale. It was really in quite a cowed voice Miss Dover went on to say, "La! don't fly out like that. Well, then, the man refused to bet with your money; so then Mademoiselle Klosking said she would; and she played — oh, how she did play! She doubled, and doubled, and doubled, hundreds upon hundreds. She made a mountain of gold, and a pyramid of bank-notes; and she never stopped till she broke the bank — there!"

"With my money?" gasped Severne.

"Yes, with your money: your friend with the loud tie pocketed it; I beg your pardon, not your friend — only hers. Harrington says he is her *cher ami.*"

"The money is mine!" he shrieked. "I don't care who played with it, it is mine. And the fellow had the impudence to send me back my fifty pounds to the 'Russie.'" [1]

"What! you gave him your address?" This with an involuntary glance of surprise at Zoe.

"Of course. Do you think I leave a man fifty pounds to play with, and don't give him my address? He has won thousands with my money, and sent me back my fifty, for a blind, the thief!"

[1] I think I see Vizard's hand in this.

"Well, really it is too bad," said Fanny. "But there — I'm afraid you must make the best of it. Of course their sending back your fifty pounds shows they mean to keep their winnings."

"You talk like a woman," said he; then, grinding his teeth, and stretching out a long muscular arm, he said, "I'll take the blackguard by the throat, and tear it out of him, though I tear his life out along with it."

All this time Zoe had been looking at him with concern and even with admiration. He seemed more beautiful than ever, to her, under the influence of passion, and more of a man.

"Mr. Severne," said she, "be calm. Fanny has misled you, without intending it. She did not hear all that passed between those two; I did. The velveteen and necktie man refused to bet with your money. It was Mademoiselle Klosking who betted, and with her own money. She took twenty-five pounds of her own, and twenty-five pounds of yours, and won two or three hundred in a few moments. Surely, as a gentleman, you cannot ask a lady to do more than repay you your twenty-five pounds."

Severne was a little cowed by Zoe's interference. He stood his ground; but sullenly instead of violently.

"Miss Vizard, if I was weak enough to trust a lady with my money at a gambling-table, I should expect foul play; for I never knew a lady yet who would not cheat *at cards*, if she could. I trusted my money to a tradesman to bet with. If he takes a female partner, that is no business of mine, he is responsible all the same, and I'll have my money."

He jumped up, at the word, and looked out at the window: he even fumbled with the door, and tried to open it.

"You had better jump out," said Fanny.

"And then they would keep my money for good. No:" said he, "I'll wait for the nearest station." He sank back into his seat, looking unutterable things.

Fanny looked rather rueful, at first; then she said, spitefully, "You must be very sure of your influence with your old sweetheart. You forget she has got another now: a tradesman, too. He will cling to the money, and make her cling to it. Their sending the fifty pounds shows that."

Zoe's eyes were on him with microscopic power, and, with all his self-command, she saw him wince and change color, and give other signs that this shaft had told in many ways.

He shut his countenance the next moment; but it had opened, and Zoe was on fire with jealousy and suspicion.

Fluctuating Fanny regretted the turn things had taken. She did not want to lose a pleasant male companion, and she felt sure Zoe would be unhappy, and cross to her, if he went. "Surely, Mr. Severne," she said, "you will not desert us, and go back for so small a chance: why, we are a hundred and fifty miles from Homburg, and all the nearer to dear old England. There, there — we must be kinder to you, and make you forget this misfortune."

Thus spoke the trimmer. The reply took her by surprise.

"And whose fault is it that I am obliged to get out a hundred and fifty miles from Homburg? You knew all this. You could have got me a delay of a few hours to go and get my due. You know I am a poor man. With all your cleverness, you don't know what made me poor, or you would feel some remorse, perhaps; but you know I am poor when most I could wish I was rich; you have heard that old woman there fling my poverty in my teeth; yet you could keep this from me — just to assist

a cheat and play upon the feelings of a friend. Now, what good has that done you, to inflict misery on me in sport, on a man who never gave you a moment's pain if he could help it?"

Fanny looked ruefully this way and that, her face began to work, and she laid down her arms, if a lady can be said to do that, who lays down a strong weapon and takes up a stronger; in other words, she burst out crying, and said no more. You see she was poor herself.

Severne took no notice of her; he was accustomed to make women cry. He thrust his head out of the window in hopes of seeing a station near, and his whole being was restless as if he would like to jump out.

While he was in this condition of mind and body, the hand he had once kissed so tenderly, and shocked Miss Maitland, passed an envelope over his shoulder, with two lines written on it in pencil: —

"If you GO BACK TO HOMBURG, oblige ME BY REMAINING there."

This demands an explanation, but it shall be brief.

Fanny's shrewd hint, that the money could only be obtained from Mademoiselle Klosking, had pierced Zoe through and through. Her mind grasped all that had happened, all that impended, and, wisely declining to try and account for or reconcile all the jarring details, she settled, with a woman's broad instinct, that, somehow or other, his going back to Homburg meant going back to Mademoiselle Klosking. Whether that lady would buy him or not, she did not know. But going back to her meant going a journey to see a rival, with consequences illimitable.

She had courage; she had pride; she had jealousy. She resolved to lose her lover, or have him all to herself. Share him she would not, nor even endure the torture of the doubt.

She took an envelope out of her satchel, and, with the pencil attached to her *chatelaine*, wrote the fatal words, "If you go back to Homburg, oblige me by remaining there."

At this moment she was not goaded by pique, nor any petty feeling. Indeed, his reproach to Fanny had touched her a little; and it was with the tear in her eye she came to the resolution, and handed him that line, which told him she knew her value, and, cost what it might, would part with any man forever, rather than share him with the Klosking or any other woman.

Severne took the line, eyed it, realized it, fell back from the window, and dropped into his seat. This gave Zoe a consoling sense of power. She had seen her lover raging and restless, and wanting to jump out, yet now beheld him literally felled with a word from her hand.

He leaned his head in his hand in a sort of broken-down, collapsed, dogged way that moved her pity, though hardly her respect.

By and by it struck her as a very grave thing that he did not reply by word, nor even by look. He could decide with a glance, and why did he hesitate? Was he really balancing her against Mademoiselle Klosking weighted with a share of his winnings?

This doubt was wormwood to her pride and self-respect; but his crushed attitude allayed in some degree the mere irritation his doubt caused.

The minutes passed, and the miles; still that broken figure sat before her, with his face hidden by his white hand.

Zoe's courage began to falter. Misgivings seized her. She had made that a matter of love which, after all, to a man, might be a mere matter of business. He was poor, too, and she had thrust her jealousy between him

and money. He might have his pride, too, and rebel against her affront.

As for his thoughts, under that crushed exterior, which he put on for a blind, they were so deliberate and calculating, that I shall not mix them on this page with that pure and generous creature's. Another time will do to reveal his sordid arithmetic.

As for Zoe, she settled down into wishing, with all her heart, she had not submitted her lover so imperiously to a test, the severity of which she now saw she had underrated.

Presently the speed of the train began to slacken — all too soon. She now dreaded to learn her fate. Was she, or was she not, worth a few thousand pounds ready money?

A signal-post was passed, proving that they were about to enter a station. Yet another. Now the wheels were hardly turning. Now the platform was visible. Yet he never moved his white, delicate, womanish fingers from his forehead, but remained still absorbed, and looked undecided.

At last the motion entirely ceased. Then, as she turned her head to glean, if possible, the name of the place, he stole a furtive glance at her. She was pallid, agitated; he resolved upon his course.

As soon as the train stopped, he opened the door and jumped out, without a word to Zoe, or even a look.

Zoe turned pale as death. "I have lost him," said she.

"No, no!" cried Fanny. "See, he has not taken his cane and umbrella."

"*They* will not keep him from flying to his money and her," moaned Zoe. "Did you not see? He never once looked at me. He could not. I am sick at heart."

This set Fanny fluttering. "There, let me out to speak to him."

"Sit quiet," said Zoe, sternly.

"No, no. If you love him" —

"I do love him — passionately. And *therefore* I'll die rather than share him with any one."

"But it is dreadful to be fixed here, and not allowed to move hand or foot."

"It is the lot of women. Let me feel the hand of a friend, that is all, for I am sick at heart."

Fanny gave her hand, and all the sympathy her shallow nature had to bestow.

Zoe sat motionless, gripping her friend's hand almost convulsively, a statue of female fortitude.

This suspense could not last long. The officials ordered the travellers to the carriages; doors were opened, and slammed; the engine gave a snort, and only at that moment did Mr. Edward Severne tear the door open and bolt into the carriage.

Oh, it was pitiable, but lovely, to see the blood rush into Zoe's face, and the fire into her eye, and the sweet mouth expand in a smile of joy and triumph.

She sat a moment, almost paralyzed with pleasure, and then cast her eyes down, lest their fire should proclaim her feelings too plainly.

As for Severne, he only glanced at her as he came in, and then shunned her eye. He presented to her the grave, resolved countenance of a man who has been forced to a decision, but means to abide by it.

In reality he was delighted at the turn things had taken. The money was not necessarily lost, since he knew where it was; and Zoe had compromised herself beyond retreating. He intended to wear this anxious face a long while. But his artificial snow had to melt; so real a sun shone full on it; the moment he looked full at Zoe, she repaid him with such a point-blank beam of glorious tenderness and gratitude, as made him thrill

with passion as well as triumph. He felt her whole heart was his, and from that hour, his poverty would never be allowed to weigh with her. He cleared up, and left off acting, because it was superfluous; he had now only to bask in sunshine. Zoe, always tender, but coy till this moment, made love to him like a young goddess. Even Fanny yielded to the solid proof of sincerity he had given, and was downright affectionate.

He was king. And from one gradation to another, they entered Cologne with Severne seated between the two girls, each with a hand in his, and a great disposition to pet him and spoil him; more than once, indeed, a delicate head just grazed each of his square shoulders; but candor compels me to own that their fatigue, and the yawing of the carriage at the time, were more to blame than the tired girls; for at the enormity there was a prompt retirement to a distance. Miss Maitland was in the next compartment fast asleep; and Vizard, from the first, had preferred male companions and tobacco.

At Cologne they visited the pride of Germany, that mighty cathedral, which the Middle Ages projected, commenced, and left to decay of old age before completion, and our enterprising age will finish; but went on the same day.

Before they reached England, the love-making between Severne and Zoe, though it never passed the bounds of good taste, was so apparent to any female eye, that Miss Maitland remonstrated severely with Fanny.

But the trimmer was now won to the other side. She would not offend Aunt Maitland by owning her conversion. She said, hypocritically, "I am afraid it is no use objecting at present, aunt. The attachment is too strong on both sides. And, whether he is poor or not, he has sacrificed his money to her feelings, and so, now, she

feels bound in honor. I know her; she won't listen to a word now, aunt; why irritate her? She would quarrel with both of us in a moment."

"Poor girl!" said Miss Maitland; and took the hint. She had still an arrow in her quiver —Vizard.

In mid-channel, ten miles south of Dover, she caught him in a lucid interval of non-smoke. She reminded him he had promised her to give Mr. Severne a hint about Zoe.

"So I did," said he.

"And have you?"

"Well, no; to tell the truth, I forgot."

"Then please do it now, for they are going on worse than ever."

"I'll warn the fool," said he.

He did warn him, and in the following terms: —

"Look here, old fellow. I hear you are — hum — paying a good deal of attention to my sister Zoe."

No answer. Severne on his guard.

"Now, you had better mind your eye. She is a very pretty girl, and you may find yourself entangled before you know where you are."

Severne hung his head. "Of course, I know it is great presumption in me."

"Presumption? — fiddlestick! Such a man as you are ought not to be tied to any woman, or, if you must be, you ought not to go cheap. Mind, Zoe is a poor girl: only ten thousand in the world. Flirt with who you like; there is no harm in that; but don't get seriously entangled with any of them. Good sisters, and good daughters, and good flirts make bad wives."

"Oh, then," said Severne, "it is only on her account you object."

"Well, principally. And I don't exactly object; I warn. In the first place, as soon as ever we get into

Barfordshire, she will most likely jilt you. You may be only her Continental lover. How can I tell, *or you either?* And, if not, and you were to be weak enough to marry her, she would develop unexpected vices directly — they all do; and you are not rich enough to live in a house of your own, you would have to live in mine: a fine fate for a rising blade like you."

"What a terrible prospect! to be tied to the best friend in England, as well as the loveliest woman."

"Oh, if that is the view you take," said Vizard, beaming with delight, "it is no use talking reason to *you.*"

When they reached London, Vizard gave Miss Maitland an outline of this conversation; and, so far from seeing the humor of it, which, nevertheless, was pretty strong, and characteristic of the man and his one foible, she took the huff, and would not even stay to dinner at the hotel. She would go into her own county by the next train, bag and baggage.

Mr. Severne was the only one who offered to accompany her to the Great Western Railway. She declined. He insisted, went with her, got her ticket, numbered and arranged her packages, and saw her safely off, with an air of profound respect and admirably feigned regret.

That she was the dupe of his art may be doubted; that he lost nothing by it is certain. Men are not ruined by civility. As soon as she was seated, she said, "I beg, sir, you will waste no more time with me. Mr. Severne, you have behaved to me like a gentleman, and that is very unusual in a man of your age nowadays. I cannot alter my opinion about my niece and you; but I *am* sorry you are a poor gentleman — much too poor to marry her — and I wish I could make you a rich one; but I cannot. There is my hand."

You should have seen the air of tender veneration with which the young Machiavel bowed over her hand,

and even imprinted a light touch on it with his smooth lips.

Then he retired, disconsolate, and, once out of sight, whipped into a gin-palace, and swallowed a quartern of neat brandy, to take the taste out of his mouth, as he pretended. "Go it, Ned," said he to himself; "you can't afford to make enemies."

The old lady went off bitter against the whole party, *except Mr. Severne;* and he retired to his friends, disembarrassed of the one foe he had not turned into a downright friend, but only disarmed. Well does the great Voltaire recommend what he well calls "le grand art de plaire."

Vizard sent Harris into Barfordshire, to prepare for the comfort of the party, and to light fires in all the bedrooms, though it was summer, and to see the beds, blankets, and sheets aired at the very fires of the very rooms they were to be used in. This sacred office he never trusted to a housekeeper; he used even to declare, as the result of experience, that it was beyond the intellect of any woman really to air mattresses, blankets, and sheets — all three. He had also a printed list he used to show about, of five acquaintances, stout fellows all, whom "little bits of women" (such was his phraseology) had laid low with damp beds, having crippled two for life with rheumatism and lumbago, and sent three to their long home.

Meantime Severne took the ladies to every public attraction by day and night; and Vizard thanked him, before the fair, for his consideration in taking them off his hands; and Severne retorted by thanking him for leaving them on his.

It may seem, at first, a vile selection; but I am going to ask the ladies, who honor me with their attention, to follow, not that gay, amorous party of three, but this solitary cynic on his round.

Taking a turn round the garden in Leicester Square, which was new to him, Harrington Vizard's observant eye saw a young lady rise up from a seat, to go, but turn pale directly, and sit down again upon the arm of the seat as if for support.

"Hollo!" said Vizard, in his blunt way; "*you* are not well. What can I do for you?"

"I am all right," said she; "please go on" — the latter words in a tone that implied she was not a novice, and the attentions of gentlemen to strange ladies were suspected.

"I beg your pardon," said Vizard, coolly. "You are not all right. You look as if you were going to faint."

"What, are my lips blue?"

"No; but they are pale."

"Well, then, it is not a case of fainting. It *may* be exhaustion."

"You know best. What shall we do?"

"Why, nothing. Yes; mind our own business."

"With all my heart; my business just now is to offer you some restorative — a glass of wine."

"Oh, yes! The idea of me going into a public-house with you! Besides, I don't believe in stimulants. Strength can only enter the human body one way. I know what is the matter with me."

"What is it?"

"I am not obliged to tell *you*."

"Of course, you are not obliged; but you might as well."

"Well, then, it is hunger."

"Hunger!"

"Hunger — famine — starvation. Don't you know English?"

"I hope you are not serious, madam," said Vizard, very gravely. "However, if ladies will say such things

as that, men with stomachs in their bosoms must act accordingly. Oblige me by taking my arm, as you are weak, and we will adjourn to that eating-house over the way."

"Much obliged," said the lady, satirically; "our acquaintance is not *quite* long enough for that."

He looked at her, — a tall, slim, young lady, black merino, by no means new, clean cuffs and collar, leaning against the chair for support, and yet sacrificing herself to conventional propriety, and even withstanding him with a pretty little air of defiance that was pitiable, her pallor and the weakness of her body considered.

The poor woman-hater's bowels began to yearn. "Look here, you little spit-fire," said he; "if you don't instantly take my arm, I'll catch you up, and carry you over, with no more trouble than you would carry a thread-paper."

She looked him up and down very keenly, and at last, with a slight expression of feminine approval, the first she had vouchsafed him. Then she folded her arms, and levelled her little nose at him like a bayonet. "You daren't. I'll call the police."

"If you do, I'll tell them you are my little cousin, mad as a March hare; starving, and won't eat. Come, how is it to be?" He advanced upon her.

"You can't be in earnest, sir," said she, with sudden dignity.

"Am I not, though? You don't know *me*. I am used to be obeyed. If you don't go with me, like a sensible girl, I'll carry you — to your dinner — like a ruffian."

"Then, I'll go, like a lady," said she, with sudden humility.

He offered her his arm. She passed hers within; but leaned as lightly as possible on it, and her poor pale face was a little pink as they went.

He entered the eating-house, and asked for two por-

tions of cold roast beef, not to keep her waiting. They were brought.

"Sir," said she, with a subjugated air, "will you be so good as cut up the meat small, and pass it to me, a bit or two at a time?"

He was surprised, but obeyed her orders.

"And if you could make me talk a little? Because, at sight of the meat so near me, I feel like a tigress—poor human nature! Sir, I have not eaten meat for a week, nor food of any kind this two days."

"Good God!"

"So I must be prudent. People have gorged themselves with furious eating under those circumstances; that is why I asked you to supply me slowly. Thank you. You need not look at me like that. Better folk than I have *died* of hunger. Something tells me I have reached the lowest spoke, when I have been indebted to a stranger for a meal."

Vizard felt the water come into his eyes; but he resisted that pitiable weakness. "Bother that nonsense!" said he. "I'll introduce myself, and then you can't throw *stranger* in my teeth. I am Harrington Vizard, a Bradfordshire squire."

"I thought you were not a cockney."

"Lord forbid! Does that information entitle me to any in return?"

"I don't know; but, whether or no, my name is Rhoda Gale."

"Have another plate, Miss Gale?"

"Thanks."

He ordered another.

"I am proud of your confiding your name to me, Miss Gale; but, to tell the truth, what I wanted to know is how a young lady of your talent and education could be so badly off as you must be. It is not impertinent curiosity."

The young lady reflected a moment. "Sir," said she, "I don't think it is; and I would not much mind telling you. Of course I studied you before I came here. Even hunger would not make me sit in a tavern beside a fool, or a snob, or — (with a faint blush) — a libertine. But to tell one's story, that is so egotistical, for one thing."

"Oh, it is never egotistical to oblige."

"Now that is sophistical. Then, again, I am afraid I could not tell it to you without crying, because you seem rather a manly man, and some of it might revolt you, and you might sympathize right out, and then I should break down."

"No matter: do us both good."

"Yes, but before the waiters and people! See how they are staring at us already!"

"We will have another go in at the beef, and then adjourn to the garden for your narrative."

"No; as much garden as you like, but no more beef. I have eaten one sirloin, I reckon. Will you give me one cup of black tea without sugar or milk?"

Vizard gave the order.

She seemed to think some explanation necessary, though he did not.

"One cup of tea agrees with my brain and nerves," said she. "It steadies them. That is a matter of individual experience. I should not prescribe it to others any the more for that."

Vizard sat wondering at the girl. He said to himself, "What is she? a *lusus naturæ?*"

When the tea came, and she had sipped a little, she perked up wonderfully. Said she, "Oh, the magic effct of food eaten judiciously! Now I am a lioness, and do not fear the future. Yes, I will tell you my story — and, if you think you are going to hear a love-story, you will be finely disappointed. No, *sir*," said she, with rising

fervor and heightened color, "you will hear a story the public is deeply interested in and does not know it; ay, a story that will certainly be referred to with wonder and shame whenever civilization shall become a reality, and law cease to be a tool of injustice and monopoly." She paused a moment: then said, a little doggedly, as one used to encounter prejudice, "I am a medical student; a would-be doctor."

"Ah!"

"And so well qualified by genuine gifts, by study from my infancy, by zeal, quick senses, and cultivated judgment, that, were all the leading London physicians examined to-morrow by qualified persons at the same board as myself, most of those worthy practitioners — not all, mind you — would cut an indifferent figure in modern science compared with me, whom you have had to rescue from starvation — because I am a woman."

Her eye flashed. But she moderated herself, and said, "That is the outline; and it is a grievance. Now grievances are bores. You can escape this one before it is too late."

"If it lies with me, I demand the minutest details," said Vizard, warmly.

"You shall have them; and true to the letter."

Vizard settled the small account, and adjourned, with his companion, to the garden. She walked by his side, with her face sometimes thoughtfully bent on the ground, and sometimes confronting him with ardor, and told him a true story, the simplicity of which I shall try not to spoil with any vulgar arts of fiction: —

A LITTLE NARRATIVE OF DRY FACTS TOLD TO A WOMAN-HATER, BY A WOMAN.

CHAPTER XIV.

"My father was an American, my mother English. I was born near Epsom, and lived there ten years. Then my father had property left him in Massachusetts, and we went to Boston. Both my parents educated me, and began very early. I observe that most parents are babies at teaching, compared with mine. My father was a linguist, and taught me to lisp German, French, and English; my mother was an ideal woman: she taught me three rarities — attention, observation, and accuracy. If I went a walk in the country, I had to bring her home a budget; the men and women on the road, their dresses, appearance, countenances, and words; every kind of bird in the air, and insect and chrysalis in the hedges; the crops in the fields, the flowers and herbs on the banks. If I walked in the town, I must not be eyes and no eyes; woe betide me if I could only report the dresses. Really, I have known me, when I was but eight, come home to my mother laden with details, when perhaps an untrained girl of eighteen could only have specified that she had gone up and down a thoroughfare. Another time mother would take me on a visit: next day, or perhaps next week, she would expect me to describe every article of furniture in her friend's room, and the books on the table, and repeat the conversation, the topics at all events. She taught me to master history *accurately.* To do this she was artful enough to turn sport into science. She utilized a game: young people in Boston play it. A writes an anecdote on paper, or perhaps produces it in print. She reads it off to B. B goes away,

and writes it down by memory; then reads her writing out to C. C has to listen, and convey her impression to paper. This she reads to D, and D goes and writes it. Then the original story and D's version are compared; and generally speaking, the difference of the two is a caution — against oral tradition: when the steps of deviation are observed, it is quite a study.

"My mother, with her good wit, saw there was something better than fun to be got out of this. She trained my memory of great things with it. She began with striking passages of history, and played the game with father and me. But, as my power of retaining, and repeating correctly, grew, by practice, she enlarged the business, and kept enriching my memory, so that I began to have tracts of history at my fingers' ends. As I grew older, she extended the sport to laws and the great public controversies in religion, politics, and philosophy, that have agitated the world. But here she had to get assistance from her learned friends. She was a woman valued by men of intellect, and she had no mercy — milked jurists, physicians, and theologians, and historians, all into my little pail. To be sure, they were as kind about it as she was unscrupulous. They saw I was a keen student, and gave my mother many a little gem in writing. She read them out to me: I listened hard, and thus I fixed many great and good things in my trained memory; and repeated them against the text: I was never allowed to see *that*.

"With this sharp training, school subjects were child's play to me, and I won a good many prizes very easily. My mother would not let me waste a single minute over music. She used to say, 'Music extracts what little brains a girl has. Open the piano, you shut the understanding.' I am afraid I bore you with my mother."

"Not at all, not at all. I admire her."

"Oh, thank you — thank you, sir. She never uses big words; so it is only of late I have had the *nous* to see how wise she is: she corrected the special blots of the female character in me; and it is sweet to me to talk of that dear friend. What would I give to see her here!

"Well, then, sir, she made me, as far as she could, a — what shall I say? — a kind of little intellectual gymnast, fit to begin any study; but she left me to choose my own line. Well, I was for natural history first; began like a girl; gathered wild flowers and simples at Epsom, along with an old woman: she discoursed on their traditional virtues, and knew little of their real properties; *that* I have discovered since.

"From herbs to living things; never spared a chrysalis, but always took it home, and watched it break into wings. Hung over the ponds in June, watching the eggs of the frog turn to tadpoles, and the tadpoles to Johnny Crapaud. I obeyed Scripture in one thing, for I studied the ants and their ways.

"I collected birds' eggs. At nine, not a boy in the parish could find more nests in a day than I could. With birds'-nesting, buying, and now and then begging, I made a collection that figures in a museum over the water, and is entitled, 'Eggs of British Birds.' The colors attract, and people always stop at it. But it does no justice whatever to the great variety of sea-birds' eggs on the coast of Britain.

"When I had learned what little they teach in schools, especially drawing, and that is useful in scientific pursuits, I was allowed to choose my own books, and attend lectures. One blessed day I sat and listened to Agassiz — ah! No tragedy well played, nor opera sung, ever moved a heart so deeply as he moved mine, that great and earnest man, whose enthusiasm for nature was as

fresh as my own, and his knowledge a thousand times larger. Talk of heaven opening to the Christian pilgrim as he passes Jordan! Why, God made earth as well as heaven, and it is worthy of the Architect; and it is a joy divine when earth opens to the true admirer of God's works. Sir, earth opened to me, as Agassiz discoursed.

"I followed him about like a little bloodhound, and dived into the libraries after each subject he treated or touched.

"It was another little epoch in my life when I read White's letters to Pennant about natural history in Selborne. Selborne is an English village, not half so pretty as most; and, until Gilbert White came, nobody saw anything there worth printing. His book showed me that the humblest spot in nature becomes extraordinary the moment extraordinary observation is applied to it. I must mimic Gilbert White directly. I pestered my poor parents to spend a month or two in the depths of the country, on the verge of a forest. They yielded with groans; I kissed them, and we rusticated. I pried into every living thing, not forgetting my old friends the insect tribe. Here I found ants with grander ideas than they have to home, and satisfied myself that they have more brains than apes. They co-operate more, and in complicated things. Sir, there are ants that make greater marches, for their size, than Napoleon's invasion of Russia. Even the less nomad tribes will march through fields of grass, where each blade is a high gum-tree to them, and never lose the track. I saw an army of red ants, with generals, captains, and ensigns, start at daybreak, march across a road, through a hedge, and then through high grass till noon, and surprise a fortification of black ants and take it after a sanguinary resistance. All that must have been planned beforehand, you know, and carried out to the letter. Once I found a colony

busy on some hard ground, preparing an abode. I happened to have been microscoping a wasp, so I threw him down among the ants. They were disgusted. They ran about collecting opinions. Presently half of them burrowed into the earth below and undermined him, till he lay on a crust of earth as thin as a wafer, and a deep grave below. Then they all got on him except one, and he stood pompous on a pebble and gave orders. The earth broke — the wasp went down into his grave — and the ants soon covered him with loose earth, and resumed their domestic architecture. I concluded that though the monkey resembles man most in body, the ant comes nearer him in mind. As for dogs, I don't know where to rank them in *nature*, because they have been pupils of man for centuries. I bore you?"

"No."

"Oh, yes, I do: an enthusiast is always a bore. 'Les Fâcheux' of Molière are only enthusiasts. Well, sir, in one word, I was a natural philosopher — very small, but earnest; and, in due course, my studies brought me to the wonders of the human body. I studied the outlines of anatomy in books and plates, and prepared figures; and from that, by degrees, I was led on to surgery and medicine — in books, you understand; and they are only half the battle. Medicine is a thing one can do; it is a noble science, a practical science, and a subtle science, where I thought my powers of study and observation might help me to be keen at reading symptoms, and do good to man, and be a famous woman; so I concluded to benefit mankind and myself. Stop! that sounds like self-deception. It must have been myself and mankind I concluded to benefit. Any way, I pestered that small section of mankind, which consisted of my parents, until they consented to let me study medicine in Europe."

"What! all by yourself?"

"Yes. Oh, girls are very independent in the States, and govern the old people. Mine said 'No' a few dozen times; but they were bound to end in 'Yes,' and I went to Zurich. I studied hard there, and earned the approbation of the professors; but the school deteriorated; too many ladies poured in from Russia; some were not in earnest, and preferred flirting to study, and did themselves no good, and made the male students idle and wickeder than ever — if possible."

"What else could you expect?" said Vizard.

"Nothing else from *unpicked* women. But when all the schools in Europe shall be open — as they ought to be, and must, and shall — there will be no danger of shallow girls crowding to any particular school. Besides, there will be a more strict and rapid routine of examination then to sift out the female flirts — and the male dunces along with them, I hope.

"Well, sir, we few, that really meant medicine, made inquiries, and heard of a famous old school in the south of France, where women had graduated of old; and two of us went there to try — an Italian lady and myself. We carried good testimonials from Zurich; and, not to frighten the Frenchmen at starting, I attacked them alone. Cornelia was my elder, and my superior in attainments; she was a true descendant of those learned ladies who have adorned the chairs of philosophy, jurisprudence, anatomy, and medicine in her native country; but she has the wisdom of the serpent, as well as of the sage; and she put me forward because of my red hair. She said that would be a passport to the dark philosophers of France."

"Was not that rather foxy, Miss Gale?"

"Foxy as my hair itself, Mr. Vizard.

"Well, I applied to a professor. He received me with

profound courtesy and feigned respect, but was staggered at my request to matriculate. He gesticulated and bowed *à la française,* and begged the *permission* of his foxy-haired invader from northern climes to consult his colleagues. Would I do him the great honor to call again next day at twelve? I did, and met three other polished authorities. One spoke for all, and said: If I had not brought with me proofs of serious study, they should have dissuaded me very earnestly from a science I could not graduate in without going through practical courses of anatomy and clinical surgery. That, however (with a regular French shrug), was my business, not theirs. It was not for them to teach me delicacy, but rather to learn it from me. That was a French sneer. The French are *un gens moqueur,* you know. I received both shrug and sneer like marble. He ended it all by saying: The school had no written law excluding doctresses; and the old records prove women had graduated, and even lectured, there. I had only to pay my fees, and enter upon my routine of studies. So I was admitted on sufferance; but I soon earned the good opinion of the professors, and of this one in particular: and then Cornelia applied for admission, and was let in too. We lived together, and had no secrets; and I think, sir, I may venture to say that we showed some little wisdom, if you consider our age, and all that was done to spoil us. As to parrying their little sly attempts at flirtation, that is nothing; we came prepared: but, when our fellow students found we were in earnest, and had high views, the chivalrous spirit of a gallant nation took fire, and they treated us with a delicate reverence that might have turned any woman's head. But we had the credit of a sneered-at sex to keep up, and felt our danger, and warned each other; and I remember I told Cornelia how many young ladies in the States I had seen puffed up

by the men's extravagant homage, and become spoiled children, and offensively arrogant and discourteous, so I begged her to check those vices in me the moment she saw them coming.

"When we had been here a year, attending all the lectures — clinical medicine and surgery included — news came that one British school, Edinburgh, had shown symptoms of yielding to Continental civilization, and relaxing monopoly. That turned me north directly. My mother is English: I wanted to be a British doctress, not a French. Cornelia had misgivings, and even condescended to cry over me. But I am a mule, and always was. Then that dear friend made terms with me; I must not break off my connection with the French school, she said. No; she had thought it well over: I must ask leave of the French professors to study in the north, and bring back notes about those distant Thulians. Says she, 'Your studies in that savage island will be allowed to go for something here, if you improve your time; and you will be sure to, sweetheart, that I may be always proud of you.' Dear Cornelia!"

"Am I to believe all this?" said Vizard. "Can women be such true friends?"

"What cannot women be? What! are you one of those who take us for *a clique?* Don't you know that more than half mankind are women?"

"Alas!"

"Alas for them!" said Rhoda, sharply.

"Well, well," said Vizard, putting on sudden humility, "don't let us quarrel. I hate quarrelling — where I'm sure to get the worst. Ay, friendship is a fine thing, in men or women; a far nobler sentiment than love. You will not admit that, of course, being a woman."

"Oh, yes; I will," said she. "Why, I have observed love attentively: and I pronounce it a fever of the mind.

It disturbs the judgment, and perverts the conscience. You side with the beloved, right or wrong. What personal degradation! I observe, too, that a grand passion is a grand misfortune; they are always in a storm of hope, fears, doubt, jealousy, rapture, rage, and the end deceit, or else satiety. Friendship is steady and peaceful; not much jealousy, no heart-burnings. It strengthens with time, and survives the smallpox, and a wooden leg. It doubles our joys, and divides our grief, and lights and warms our lives with a steady flame. *Solem e mundo tollunt, qui tollunt amicitiam.*"

"Hullo!" cried Vizard. "What! you know Latin too?"

"Why, of course — a smattering; or how could I read Pliny, and Celsus, and ever so much more rubbish, that custom chucks down before the gates of knowledge, and says, 'There — before you go the right road, you ought to go the wrong; *it is usual*'? Study now, with the reverence they don't deserve, and non-observers of antiquity."

"Spare me the ancients, Miss Gale," said Vizard, "and reveal me the girl of the period. When I was so ill-bred as to interrupt you, you had left France, crowned with laurels, and were just invading Britain."

Something in his words or his tone discouraged the subtle observer, and she said coldly, "Excuse me; I have hardly the courage. My British history is a tale of injustice, suffering, insult, and, worst of all, defeat. I cannot promise to relate it with that composure whoever pretends to science ought: the wound still bleeds."

Then Vizard was vexed with himself, and looked grave and concerned. He said, gently, "Miss Gale, I am sorry to give you pain; but what you have told me is so new and interesting, I shall be disappointed if you withhold the rest; besides, you know it gives no lasting pain

to relate our griefs. Come — come — be brave, and tell me."

"Well, I will," said she. "Indeed, some instinct moves me. Good may come of my telling it you. I think — somehow — you are — a — just man."

In the act of saying this, she fixed her gray eyes steadily and searchingly upon Vizard's face, so that he could scarcely meet them, they were so powerful; then, suddenly, the observation seemed to die out of them, and reflection to take its place; those darting eyes were turned inwards. It was a marked variety of power. There was something wizard-like in the vividness with which two distinct mental processes were presented by the varied action of a single organ: and Vizard then began to suspect that a creature stood before him with a power of discerning and digesting truth, such as he had not yet encountered either in man or woman. She entered on her British adventures in her clear silvery voice: it was not, like Ina Klosking's, rich, and deep, and tender: yet it had a certain gentle beauty to those who love truth, because it was dispassionate, yet expressive, and cool, yet not cold: one might call it truth's silver trumpet.

On the brink of this extraordinary passage I pause to make three remarks in my own person. 1st, Let no reader of mine allow himself to fancy Rhoda Gale and her antecedents are a mere excrescence of my story: she was rooted to it even before the first scene of it — the meeting of Ashmead and the Klosking — and this will soon appear. 2d, She is now going into a controverted matter; and though she is sincere and truthful, she is of necessity a *partisan*. Do not take her for a judge. You be the judge. 3d, But, as a judge never shuts his mind to either side, do not refuse her a fair hearing. Above all, do not underrate the question. Let not the

balance of your understanding be so upset by ephemeral childishness, as to fancy that it matters much whether you break an egg top or bottom, because Gulliver's two nations went to war about it; or that it matters much whether your queen is called Queen of India or empress, because two parties made a noise about it, and the country has wasted ten thousand square miles of good paper on the subject. Fight against these illusions of petty and ephemeral minds. It does not matter one straw to *mankind* whether any one woman is called queen, or empress, of India; and it matters greatly to *mankind* whether the whole race of women are to be allowed to study medicine, and practise it, if they can rival the male, or are to be debarred from testing their scientific ability, and so outlawed, *though taxed*, in defiance of British liberty, and all justice human and divine, by eleven hundred lawgivers — most of them fools.

CHAPTER XV.

"When I reached Great Britain, the right of women to medicine was in this condition — a learned lawyer explained it carefully to me; I will give you his words. — The unwritten law of every nation admits all mankind, and not the male half only, to the study and practice of medicine and the sale of drugs. In Great Britain this law is called the common law, and is deeply respected. Whatever liberty it allows to men or women is held sacred in our courts, until *directly* and *explicitly* withdrawn by some Act of the Legislature. Under this ancient liberty women have occasionally practised general medicine and surgery, up to the year 1858. But, for centuries, they *monopolized*, by custom, one branch of practice, the obstetric, and that, together with the occasional treatment of children, and the nursing of both sexes, which is semi-medical, and is their *monopoly*, seems, on the whole, to have contented them, till late years, when their views were enlarged by wider education, and other causes. But their abstinence from general practice, like their monopoly of obstetrics, lay with women themselves, and not with the law of England. That law is the same in this respect as the common law of Italy and France; and the constitution of Bologna, where so many doctresses have filled the chairs of medicine and other sciences, makes no more direct provision for female students than does the constitution of any Scotch or English university. The whole thing lay with the women themselves, and with local civilization. Years ago, Italy was far more civilized than England;

so Italian women took a large sphere. Of late the Anglo-Saxon has gone in for civilization with his usual energy, and is eclipsing Italy; therefore his women aspire to larger spheres of intellect and action, beginning in the States, because American women are better educated than English. The advance of *women* in useful attainments, is the most infallible sign in any country of advancing civilization. All this about civilization is my observation, sir, and not the lawyer's. Now for the lawyer again. — Such being the law of England, the British Legislature passed an Act in 1858, the real object of which was to protect the public against incapable doctors, not against capable doctresses or doctors. The Act excludes from medical practice all persons whatever, male or female, unless registered in a certain register; and to get upon that register, the person, male or female, must produce a license or diploma, granted by one of the British examining boards specified in a schedule attached to the Act.

"Now these examining boards were all members of the leading medical schools. If the Legislature had taken the usual precaution, and had added a clause *compelling* those boards to examine worthy applicants, the Act would have been a sound public measure; but for want of that foresight — and without foresight a lawgiver is an impostor and a public pest — the State robbed women of their old common-law rights with one hand, and with the other enabled a respectable trades-union to thrust them out of their new statutory rights. Unfortunately, the respectable union, to whom the Legislature delegated an unconstitutional power they did not claim themselves, of excluding qualified persons from examination, and so robbing them of their license and their bread, had an overpowering interest to exclude qualified women from medicine; they had the same interest as

the watchmakers' union, the printers', the painters on china, the calico engravers', and others, have to exclude qualified women from those branches, though peculiarly fitted for them, but not more so than they are for the practice of medicine, Nature having made *them*, and not *men*, the medical, and unmusical, sex.

"Wherever there's a trades-union, the weakest go to the wall. Those vulgar unions I have mentioned exclude women from skilled labor they excel in, by violence and conspiracy, though the law threatens them with imprisonment for it: was it in nature, then, that the medical union would be infinitely forbearing, when the Legislature went and patted it on the back, and said, *You* can conspire with safety against your female rivals? Of course the clique were tempted more than any clique could bear, by the unwariness of the Legislature, and closed the doors of the medical schools to female applicants. Against unqualified female practitioners they never acted with such zeal and consent; and why? — the female quack is a public pest, and a good foil to the union; the qualified doctress is a public good, and a blow to the union.

"The British medical union was now in a fine attitude by Act of Parliament. It could talk its contempt of medical women, and act its terror of them, and keep both its feigned contempt and its real alarm safe from the test of a public examination, that crucible in which cant, surmise, and mendacity are soon evaporated or precipitated, and only the truth stands firm.

"For all that, two female practitioners got upon the register, and stand out, living landmarks of experience and the truth in the dead wilderness of surmise and prejudice.

"I will tell you how they got in. The Act of Parliament makes two exceptions; first, it lets in *without*

examination — and that is very unwise — any foreign doctor who shall be practising in England at the date of the act, although, with equal incapacity, it omits to provide that any future foreign doctor shall be able to *demand examination* (in with the old foreign fogies, blindfold, right or wrong; out with the rising foreign luminaries of an ever-advancing science, right or wrong); and secondly, it lets in without examination, to experiment on the vile body of the public, any person, qualified or unqualified, who may have been made a doctor by a very venerable and equally irrelevant functionary. Guess, now, who it is that a British Parliament sets above the law, as a doctor-maker for that public it professes to love and protect?"

"The Regius Professor of Medicine?"

"No."

"Tyndall?"

"No."

"Huxley?"

"No."

"Then I give it up."

"The Archbishop of Canterbury."

"Oh, come! a joke is a joke."

"This is no joke. Bright monument of British flunkeyism and imbecility, there stands the clause setting that reverend and irrelevant doctor-maker above the law, which sets his Grace's female relations below the law, and, in practice, outlaws the whole female population, starving those who desire to practise medicine learnedly, and oppressing those who, out of modesty, not yet quite smothered by custom and monopoly, desire to consult a learned female physician, instead of being driven, like sheep, by iron tyranny — in a country that babbles liberty — to a male physician or a female quack.

"Well, sir, in 1849 Miss Elizabeth Blackwell fought

the good fight in the United States, and had her troubles; because the States were not so civilized then as now. She graduated doctor at Geneva in the State of New York.

"She was practising in England in 1858, and demanded her place on the register. She is an Englishwoman by birth; but she is an English M.D. only through America having more brains than Britain. This one islander sings, 'Hail Columbia!' as often as 'God save the Queen!' I reckon.

"Miss Garrett, an enthusiastic student, travelled north, south, east, and west, and knocked in vain at the doors of every great school and university in Britain; but at last found a chink in the iron shutters of the London apothecaries. It seems Parliament was wiser in 1815 than in 1858, for it inserted a clause in the Apothecaries' Act of 1815 *compelling* them to examine all persons who should apply to them for examination, after proper courses of study. Their charter contained no loophole to evade the act, and substitute 'him' for 'person'; so they let Miss Garrett in as a student. Like all the students, she had to attend lectures on chemistry, botany, materia medica, zoölogy, natural philosophy, and clinical surgery. In the collateral subjects they let her sit with the male students; but in anatomy and surgery she had to attend the same lectures privately, and pay for lectures all to herself. This cost her enormous fees. However, it is only fair to say, that if she had been one of a dozen female students, the fees would have been diffused; as it was, she had to gild the pill out of her private purse.

"In the hospital teaching she met difficulties and discouragement, though she asked for no more opportunities than are granted readily to professional nurses and female amateurs. But the whole thing is a mere money question; that is the key to every lock in it.

"She was freely admitted at last to one great hospital, and all went smoothly till some surgeon examined the students *vivâ voce;* then Miss Garrett was off her guard, and displayed too marked a superiority; thereupon the male students played the woman, and begged she might be excluded; and, I am sorry to say, for the credit of your sex, this unmanly request was complied with by the womanish males in power.

"However, at her next hospital, Miss Garrett was more discreet, and took pains to conceal her galling superiority.

"All her trouble ended — where her competitors' began — at the public examination. She passed brilliantly, and is an English apothecary. In civilized France she is a learned physician.

"She had not been an apothecary a week, before the Apothecaries' Society received six hundred letters from the medical small-fry in town and country; they threatened to send no more boys to the Apothecaries', but to the College of Surgeons, if ever another woman received an apothecary's license. Now, you know, all men tremble in England at the threats of a trades-union; so the Apothecaries instantly cudgelled their brains to find a way to disobey the law, and obey the union. The medical press gave them a hint, and they passed a by-law forbidding their students to receive any part of their education *privately;* and made it known, at the same time, that their female students would not be allowed to study the leading subjects *publicly.* And so they baffled the Legislature, and outlawed half the nation, by a juggle, which the press and the public would have risen against, if a single grown-up man had been its victim, instead of four million adult women. Now you are a straightforward man, what do you think of that?"

"Humph!" said Vizard, "I do not altogether approve it. The strong should not use the arts of the weak in

fighting the weak. But in spite of your eloquence I mean to forgive them anything. Shakespeare has provided them with an excuse that fits all time, —

'Our poverty, but not our will, consents.'"

"Poverty! the poverty of a company in the City of London! *Allons donc.* Well, sir, for years after this all Europe, even Russia, advanced in civilization, and opened their medical schools to women; so did the United States; only the pig-headed Briton stood stock-still, and gloried in his minority of one, as if one small island is likely to be right in its monomania, and all civilized nations wrong.

"But, whilst I was studying in France, one lion-hearted Englishwoman was moving our native isle. First she tried the University of London; and that sets up for a liberal foundation. Answer — 'Our charter is expressly framed to exclude women from medical instruction.'

"Then she sat down to besiege Edinburgh. Now Edinburgh is a very remarkable place. It has only half the houses, but ten times the intellect, of Liverpool or Manchester. And the University has two advantages as a home of *science* over the English universities; it is far behind them in Greek, which is the language of error and nescience, and before them in English, and that is a tongue a good deal of knowledge is printed in. Edinburgh is the only centre of British literature except London.

"One medical professor received the pioneer with a concise severity, and declined to hear her plead her cause; and one received her almost brutally. He said, 'No respectable woman would apply to him to study medicine.' Now respectable women were studying it all over Europe."

"Well, but perhaps his soul lived in an island."

"That is so. However, personal applicants must expect a rub or two; and most of the professors, in and out of medicine, treated her with kindness and courtesy.

"Still, she found even the friendly professors alarmed at the idea of a woman matriculating, and becoming Civis Edinensis; so she made a moderate application to the Senate; viz., for leave to attend medical lectures. This request was indorsed by a majority of the medical professors, and granted. But on the appeal of a few medical professors against it, the Senate suspended its resolution, on the ground that there was only one applicant.

"This got wind, and other ladies came into the field directly, your humble servant amongst them. Then the Senate felt bound to recommend the University Court to admit such female students to matriculate as could pass the preliminary examination — this is in history, logic, languages, and other branches; and we prepared for it in good faith. It was a happy time; after a good day's work, I used to go up the Calton Hill or Arthur's Seat, and view the sea, and the Piræus, and the violet hills, and the romantic undulations of the city itself, and my heart glowed with love of knowledge, and with honorable ambition. I ran over the names of worthy women who had adorned medicine at sundry times and in divers places, and resolved to deserve as great a name as any in history. Refreshed by my walk — I generally walked eight miles, and practised gymnastics to keep my muscles hard — I used to return to my little lodgings; and they too were sweet to me, for I was learning a new science — logic."

"That was a nut to crack."

"I have met few easier or sweeter. One non-observer had told me it was a sham science, and mere pedantry; another, that it pretended to show men a way to truth without observing. I found, on the contrary, that it was

a very pretty little science, which does not affect to discover phenomena, but simply to guard men against rash generalization, and false deductions from true data. It taught me the untrained world is brimful of fallacies and verbal *équivoques*, that ought not to puzzle a child, but, whenever they creep into an argument, do actually confound the learned and the simple alike, and all for want of a month's logic.

"Yes, I was happy on the hill, and happy by the hearth; and so things went on till the preliminary examination came. It was not severe; we ladies all passed with credit, though many of the male aspirants failed."

"How do you account for that?" asked Vizard.

"With my eyes. I *observe* that the average male is very superior in intellect to the average female; and I *observe* that the picked female is immeasurably more superior to the average male, than the average male is to the average female."

"Is it so simple as that?"

"Ay, why not? What! are you one of those who believe that Truth is obscure; hides herself; and lies in a well? I tell you, *sir*, Truth lies in no well. The place Truth lies in is — *the middle of the turnpike road.* But one old fogy puts on his green spectacles to look for her, and another his red, and another his blue; and so they all miss her, because she is a colorless diamond. Those spectacles are preconceived notions, *à priori* reasoning, cant, prejudice, the depth of Mr. Shallow's inner consciousness, etc. Then comes the *observer*, opens the eyes that God has given him, tramples on all colored spectacles, and finds Truth as surely as the spectacled theorists miss her. Say that the intellect of the average male is to the average female as ten to six, it is to the intellect of the picked female as ten to a hundred and fifty, or even less. Now the intellect of the male Edin-

burgh student was much above that of the average male, but still it fell far below that of the picked female. All the examinations at Edinburgh showed this to all God's unspectacled creatures that used their eyes."

These remarks hit Vizard hard. They accorded with his own good sense and method of arguing; but perhaps my more careful readers may have already observed this. He nodded hearty approval for once; and she went on, —

"We had now a right to matriculate, and enter on our medical course. But, to our dismay, the right was suspended. The proofs of our general proficiency, which we hoped would reconcile the professors to us as students of medicine, alarmed people, and raised us unscrupulous enemies in some who were justly respected, and others who had influence, though they hardly deserved it.

"A general council of the University was called to reconsider the pledge the Senate had given us, and overawe the University Court by the weight of academic opinion. The court itself was fluctuating, and ready to turn either way. A large number of male students cooperated against us, with a petition. They, too, were a little vexed at our respectable figure in the preliminary examination.

"The assembly met, and the union orator got up; he was a preacher of the Gospel, and carried the weight of that office. Christianity, as well as science, seemed to rise against us in his person. He made a long and eloquent speech, based on the intelligent surmises, and popular prejudices, that were diffused in a hundred leading articles, and in letters to the editor by men and women, to whom history was a dead letter in modern controversies; for the press battled this matter for two years, and furnished each party with an artillery of reasons, *pro* and *con*.

"He said: 'Woman's sphere is the hearth and the home: to impair her delicacy is to take the bloom from the peach: she could not qualify for medicine without mastering anatomy and surgery, branches that must unsex her. Providence, intending her to be man's helpmate, not his rival, had given her a body unfit for war or hard labor, and a brain four ounces lighter than a man's, and unable to cope with long study and practical science. In short, she was too good, and too stupid, for medicine.'

"It was eloquent, but it was *à priori* reasoning, and conjecture *versus* evidence: yet the applause it met with showed one how happy is the orator *qui hurle avec les loups*. Taking the scientific preacher's whole theory in theology and science, woman was high enough in creation to be the mother of God, but not high enough to be a sawbones.

"Well, a professor of *belles lettres* rose on our side, not with a rival theory, but with facts. He was a pupil of Lord Bacon, and a man of the nineteenth century; so he objected to *à priori* reasoning on a matter of experience. To settle the question of capacity, he gave a long list of women who had been famous in science. Such as Bettesia Gozzadina, Novella Andrea, Novella Calderini, Maddelena Buonsignori, and many more, who were doctors of law and university professors: Dorotea Bocchi, who was professor both of philosophy and medicine; Laura Bassi, who was elected professor of philosophy in 1732 by acclamation, and afterwards professor of experimental physics: Anna Manzolini, professor of anatomy in 1760; Gaetana Agnesi, professor of mathematics; Christina Roccati, doctor of philosophy in 1750; Clotilde Tambroni, professor of Greek in 1793; Maria Dalle Donne, doctor of medicine in 1799; Zaffira Ferretti, doctor of medicine in 1800; Maria Sega, doctor of medicine

in 1799; Madalena Noe, graduate of civil law in 1807. Ladies innumerable, who graduated in law and medicine at Pavia, Ferrara, and Padua, including Elena Lucrezia Cornaro of Padua, a very famous woman. Also in Salamanca, Alcala, Cordova, he named more than one famous doctress. Also in Heidelberg, Göttingen, Giessen, Würzburg, etc., and even at Utrecht, with numberless graduates in the arts and faculties at Montpellier and Paris in all ages. Also outside reputations, as of Doctor Bouvin and her mother, acknowledged celebrities in their branch of medicine. This chain, he said, has never been really broken. There was scarcely a great foreign university without some female student of high reputation. There were such women at Vienna and Petersburg: many such at Zurich. At Montpellier Mademoiselle Doumergue was carrying all before her, and Miss Garrett and Miss Mary Putman at Paris, though they were weighted in the race by a foreign language. Let the male English physician pass a stiff examination in scientific French before he brayed so loud. He had never done it yet. This, he said, is not an age of chimeras, it is a wise and wary age, which has established in all branches of learning a sure test of ability in man or woman — public examination followed by a public report. These public examinations are all conducted by males, and women are passing them triumphantly all over Europe and America, and graduate as doctors in every civilized country, and even in half-civilized Russia.

"He then went into our own little preliminary examination, and gave the statistics. In Latin were examined fifty-five men and three women: ten men were rejected, but no woman; seven men were respectable, seven *optimi* or first-rate, one woman *bona*, and one *optima*. In mathematics were examined sixty-seven men and four women, of whom one woman was *optima*, and one *bona*: ten men

were *optimi*, and twenty-five *boni;* the rest failed. In German two men were examined and one woman; one man was good, and one woman. In logic twenty-eight men were examined and one woman: the woman came out fifth in rank, and she had only been at it a month. In moral philosophy sixteen men were examined and one woman: the woman came out third. In arithmetic, fifty-one men and three women: two men were *optimi*, and one woman *optima;* several men failed, and not one woman. In mechanics, eighty-one men and one woman: the woman passed with fair credit, as did thirteen men; the rest failing. In French were examined fifty-eight men and four women: three men and one woman were respectable; eight men and one woman passed; two women attained the highest excellence, *optimæ*, and not one man. In English, sixty-three men and three women: three men were good, and one woman; but two women were *optimæ*, and only one man."

"Fancy you remembering figures like that," said Vizard.

"It is all training and habit," said she, simply.

"As to the study and practice of medicine degrading women, he asked if it degraded men. No; it elevated them. They could not contradict him on that point. He declined to believe, without a particle of evidence, that any science could elevate the higher sex and degrade the lower. What evidence we had ran against it. Nurses are not, as a class, unfeminine, yet all that is most appalling, disgusting, horrible, and *unsexing* in the art of healing is monopolized by them. Women see worse things than doctors. Women nurse all the patients of both sexes, often under horrible and sickening conditions, and lay out all the corpses. No doctor objects to this on sentimental grounds; and why? because the nurses get only a guinea a week, and not a guinea a flying visit: to

women the loathsome part of medicine; to man the lucrative! The noble nurses of the Crimea went to attend *males only;* yet were not charged with indelicacy. They worked gratis. The would-be doctresses look *mainly to attending women;* but then they want to be paid for it: there was the rub — it was a mere money question, and all the attempts of the union to hide this and play the sentimental shopman were transparent hypocrisy and humbug.

"A doctor justly revered in Edinburgh answered him; but said nothing new or effective; and, to our great joy, the majority went with us.

"Thus encouraged, the University Court settled the matter. We were admitted to matriculate and study medicine, under certain conditions, to which I beg your attention.

"The instruction of women for the profession of medicine was to be conducted in separate classes confined entirely to women.

"The professors of the faculty of medicine should, for this purpose, be permitted to have separate classes for women.

"All these regulations were approved by the chancellor, and are to this day a part of the law of that University.

"We ladies, five in number, but afterward seven, were matriculated and registered professional students of medicine, and passed six delightful months we now look back upon, as if it was a happy dream.

"We were picked women, all in earnest; we deserved respect, and we met with it. The teachers were kind, and we attentive and respectful: the students were courteous, and we were affable to them, but discreet. Whatever seven young women could do to earn esteem, and reconcile even our opponents to the experiment, we did.

There was not an anti-student or downright flirt amongst us: and, indeed, I have observed that an earnest love of study and science controls the amorous frivolity of women even more than men's. Perhaps our heads are really *smaller* than men's, and we haven't room in them to be like Solomon — extremely wise, and arrant fools.

"This went on until the first professional examination; but, after the examination, the war, to our consternation, recommenced. Am I then bad-hearted for thinking there must have been something in that examination which roused the sleeping spirit of trades-unionism?"

"It seems probable."

"Then view that probability by the light of fact:

"In physiology the male students were one hundred and twenty-seven; in chemistry, two hundred and twenty-six.

"Twenty-five obtained honors in physiology.

"Thirty-one in chemistry.

"In physiology and chemistry there were five women. One obtained honors in physiology alone. Four obtained honors in both physiology and chemistry.

"So, you see, the female students beat the male students in physiology at the rate of five to one, and in chemistry seven and three-quarters to one.

"But, horrible to relate, one of the ladies eclipsed twenty-nine out of the thirty-one gentlemen who took *honors* in chemistry. In capacity she surpassed them all; for the two who were above her obtained only two marks more than she did, yet they had been a year longer at the study. This entitled her to 'a Hope Scholarship' for that year.

"Would you believe it? the scholarship was refused her — in utter defiance of the founder's conditions — on the idle pretext that she had studied at a different hour from the male students, and therefore was not a member of the chemistry class."

"Then why admit her to the competition?" said Vizard.

"Why? because the *à priori* reasoners took for granted she would be defeated. Then the cry would have been, 'You had your chance; we let you try for the Hope Scholarship, but you could not win it.' Having won it, she was to be cheated out of it somehow, or anyhow. The separate class system was not that lady's fault; she would have preferred to pay the university lecturer lighter fees, and attend a better lecture with the male students. The separate class was an unfavorable condition of study, which the university imposed on us, as the condition of admitting us to the professional study of medicine. Surely, then, to cheat that lady out of her Hope Scholarship, when she had earned it under conditions of study enforced and unfavorable, was perfidious and dishonest. It was even a little ungrateful to the injured sex; for the money which founded these scholarships was women's money, every penny of it. The good Professor Hope had lectured to ladies fifty years ago; had taken their fees, and founded his scholarships with their money: and it would have done his heart good to see a lady win, and wear, that prize, which, but for his female pupils, would never have existed. But it is easy to trample on a dead man; as easy as on living women.

"The perfidy was followed by ruthless tyranny. They refused to admit the fair criminal to the laboratory; 'else,' said they, 'she'll defeat more men.'

"That killed her as a chemist. It gave inferior male students too great an advantage over her. And so the public and Professor Hope were sacrificed to a trades-union, and lost a great analytical chemist, and something more — she had, to my knowledge, a subtle diagnosis. Now we have, at present, no *great* analyst, and the few competent analysts we have do not possess diagnosis in

proportion. They can find a few poisons in the dead, but they are slow to discover them in the living; so they are not to be counted on to save a life, where crime is administering poison. That woman could, and would, I think.

"They drove her out of chemistry, wherein she was a genius, into surgery, in which she was only a talent. She is now house-surgeon in a great hospital, and the public has lost a great chemist and diagnostic physician combined.

"Up to the date of this enormity the press had been pretty evenly divided for and against us. But now, to their credit, they were unanimous, and reprobated the juggle as a breach of public faith and plain morality. Backed by public opinion, one friendly professor took this occasion to move the university to relax the regulation of separate classes, since it had been abused. He proposed that the female students should be admitted to the ordinary classes.

"This proposal was negatived by fifty-eight to forty-seven.

"This small majority was gained by a characteristic manœuvre. The Queen's name was gravely dragged in as disapproving the proposal, when in fact it could never have been submitted to her, or her comment, if any, must have been in writing; and as to the general question, she has never said a public word against medical women. She has too much sense not to ask herself, How can any woman be fit to be a queen, with powers of life and death, if no woman is fit to be so small a thing, by comparison, as a physician, or a surgeon?

"We were victims of a small majority, obtained by imagination playing upon flunkeyism; and the first result was, we were not allowed to sit down to botany with males. Mind you, we might have gathered black-

berries with them in umbrageous woods, from morn till dewy eve, and not a professor shocked in the whole faculty; but we must not sit down with them to an intellectual dinner of herbs, and listen, in their company, to the pedantic terms and childish classifications of botany, in which kindred properties are ignored. Only the male student must be told publicly that a foxglove is *Digitalis purpurea* in the improved nomenclature of science, and crow-foot is *Ranunculus sceleratus*, and the buck-bean is *Menyanthis trifoliata*, and mugwort is *Artemisia judaica;* and that having lost the properties of hyssop known to Solomon, we regain our superiority over that learned Hebrew by christening it *Gratiola officinalis.* The sexes must not be taught in one room to discard such ugly and expressive terms as snowdrop, meadow-sweet, heart's-ease, feverfew, cowslip, etc., and learned to know the cowslip as *Veris* — by class, *pentandria monogynia;* and the buttercup as *Acris, polyandria monogynia;* the snowdrop as *Galanthus nivalis, hexandria monogynia;* and the meadow-sweet as *Ulmaria;* the heart's-ease as *Viola tricolor;* and the daisy as *Bellis perennis — syngenesia superflua.*"

"Well," said Vizard, "I think the individual names can only hurt the jaws and other organs of speech. But the classifications! Is the mild lustre of science to be cast over the natural disposition of young women towards *Polyandria monogynia?* Is trigamy to be identified in their sweet souls with floral innocence, and their victims sitting by?"

"Such classifications are puerile and fanciful," said Miss Gale; "but, for that very reason, they don't infect *animals* with trigamy. Novels are much more likely to do that."

"Especially ladies' novels," suggested Vizard, meekly.

"But the sexes will never lose either morals or deli-

cacy through courses of botany endured together. It will not hurt young ladies a bit to tell them in the presence of young gentlemen that a cabbage is a thalamifloral exogen, and its stamens are tetradynamous; nor that the mushroom, *Psalliata campestris*, and the toad-stool, *Myœna campestris*, are confounded by this science in one class, *Cryptogamia*. It will not even hurt them to be told that the properties of the *Arum maculatum* are little known, but that the males are crowded round the centre of the spadix, and the females seated at the base."

Vizard, pompously: "The pulpit and the tea-table are centres of similar phenomena. Now I think of it, the pulpit is a very fair calyx, but the tea-table is rather squat."

"Yes, sir. But, more than that, not one of these pedants who growled at promiscuous botany has once objected to promiscuous dancing, not even with the gentleman's arm round the ladies' waists, which the custom of centuries cannot render decent. Yet the professors of delicacy connive, and the mother geese sit smirking at the wall. Oh, world of hypocrites and humbugs!"

"I am afraid you are an upsetter-general," said Vizard. "But you are abominably sincere; and all this is a curious chapter of human nature. Pray proceed."

Miss Gale nodded gravely, and resumed.

"So much public ridicule fell on the union for this, and the blind flunkeyism which could believe the Queen had meddled in the detail, that the professors melted under it, and threw open botany and natural history to us, with other collateral sciences.

"Then came the great fight, which is not ended yet.

"To qualify for medicine, and pass the stiff examination by which the public is very properly protected, you must be versed in anatomy and clinical surgery. Books

and lectures do not suffice for this, without the human subject — alive and dead. The University Court knew that very well when it matriculated us, and therefore it provided for our instruction by promising us separate classes.

"Backed by this public pledge, we waited on the university professor of anatomy to arrange our fees for a separate lecture. He flatly refused to instruct us separately for love or money, or to permit his assistants. That meant, 'The union sees a way to put you in a cleft stick and cheat you out of your degree, in spite of the pledge the University has given you; in spite of your fees, and of your time given to study in reliance on the promise.'

"This was a heavy blow. But there was an extra-mural establishment called Surgeons' Hall, and the University formally recognized all the lecturers in this Hall; so we applied to those lecturers, and they were shocked at the illiberality of the University professors, and admitted us at once to mixed classes. We attended lectures with the male students on anatomy and surgery; and *of all the anticipated evils, not one took place, sir.*

"The objections to mixed classes proved to be idle words; yet the old-fashioned minds opposed to us shut their eyes and went on reasoning *à priori*, and proving that the evils which they saw did not arise *must* arise should the experiment of mixed classes, which was then succeeding, ever be tried.

"To qualify us for examination we now needed but one thing more, hospital practice. The infirmary is supported not so much by the University as the town. We applied, therefore, with some confidence for the permission usually conceded to medical students. The managers refused us the *town infirmary.* Then we applied to the subscribers. The majority, not belonging

to a trades-union, declared in our favor, and intimated plainly that they would turn out the illiberal managers at the next election of managers.

"But by this time the war was hot and general, and hard blows were dealt on both sides. It was artfully suppressed by our enemies in the profession and in the press, that we had begged hard for the separate class which had been promised us in anatomy, and permission to attend, by ourselves, a limited number of wards in the infirmary; and on this falsehood by suppression worse calumnies were built.

"I shall tell you what we really were, and what foul mouths and pens insinuated we must be.

"Two accomplished women had joined us, and we were now the seven wise virgins of a half-civilized nation, and, if I know black from white, we were seven of its brightest ornaments. We were seven ladies, who wished to be doctresses, especially devoted to our own sex; seven good students, who went on our knees to the University for those separate classes in anatomy and clinical surgery which the University was bound in honor to supply us: but, our prayer rejected, said to the University, 'Well, use your own discretion about separate or mixed classes; but for your own credit, and that of human nature, do not wilfully tie a hangman's noose to throttle the weak and deserving, and don't cheat seven poor, hard-working meritorious women, your own matriculated students, out of our entrance-fees, which lie to this day in the University coffers, out of the exceptionally heavy fees we have paid to your professors, out of all the fruit of our hard study, out of our diplomas, and our bread. Solve the knot your own way. We will submit to mixed classes, or anything, except professional destruction.'

"In this spirit our lion-hearted leader wrote the letter of an uninjured dove, and said there were a great many

more wards in the infirmary than any male student could or did attend; we would be content to divide the matter thus: the male students to have the monopoly of two-thirds, we to have the bare right of admission to one-third. By this the male students (if any) who had a sincere objection to study the sick, and witness operations, in our company, could never be troubled with us; and we, though less favored than the male students, could just manage to qualify for that public examination which was to prove whether we could make able physicians or not.

"Sir, this gentle proposal was rejected with rude scorn, and in aggressive terms. Such is the spirit of a trades-union.

"Having now shown you what we were, I will now tell you what our enemies, declining to observe our conduct, though it was very public, suggested we *must* be. Seven shameless women who pursued medicine as a handle for sexuality; who went into the dissecting-room to dissect males, and into the hospital to crowd round the male patient, and who *demanded* mixed classes, that we might have male companions in those studies which every feminine woman would avoid altogether.

"This key-note struck the public was regaled with a burst of hypocrisy such as Molière never had the luck to witness, or oh, what a comedy he would have written!

"The immodest sex, taking advantage of Molière's decease without heirs of his brain, set to work in public to teach the modest sex modesty.

"In the conduct of this pleasant paradox, the representatives of that sex, which has much courage and little modesty, were two professors — who conducted the paradox so judiciously that the London press reprimanded them for their foul insinuations — and a number of young men called medical students.

"Now the medical student surpasses most young men in looseness of life and indecency of mind and speech.

"The representatives of womanhood to be instructed in modesty by these animals, old and young, were seven prudes, whose minds were devoted to study and honorable ambition. These women were as much above the average of their sex in feminine reserve and independence of the male sex as they were in intellect.

"The average girl, who throughout this discussion was *all of a sudden* puffed as a lily, because she ceased to be *observed,* can attend to nothing if a man is by; she can't work, she can't play, she is so eaten up with the feelings of her sex. The frivolous soul can just manage to play croquet with females; but, enter a man upon the scene, and she does even that very ill, and can hardly be got to take her turn in the only thing she has really given her mind to. We were angels compared with this paltry creature, and she was the standing butt of public censure, until it was found that an imaginary picture of her could be made the handle for insulting her betters.

"Against these seven prudes, decent dotards and their foul-mouthed allies flung out insinuations, which did not escape public censure; and the medical students declared their modesty was shocked at our intrusion into anatomy and surgery, and petitioned against us. Some of the press were deceived by this for a time, and *hurlaient avec les loups.*

"I took up, one day, my favorite weekly, in which nearly every writer seems to me a scholar: and was regaled with such lines as this: —

"'It appears that girls are to associate with boys as medical students, in order that, when they become women, they may be able to speak to men with entire plainness upon all the subjects of a doctor's daily practice.

"'In plain words, the aspirants to medicine and surgery desire to rid themselves speedily and effectually of that modesty which nature has planted in women.' And then the writer concludes: 'We beg to suggest that there are other places besides dissecting-rooms and hospitals where those ladies may relieve themselves of the modesty which they find so troublesome. But fathers naturally object to this being done at their sons' expense.'"

"Infamous!" cried Vizard. "One comfort, no man ever penned that. That is some old woman, writing down young ones."

"I don't know," said Rhoda. "I have met so many womanish men in this business. All I know is, that my cheeks burned, and, for once in the fight, scalding tears ran down them. It was as if a friend had spat upon me.

"What a chimera! What a monstrous misinterpretation of pure minds by minds impure! To *us* the dissecting-room was a temple, and the dead an awe, revolting to all our senses, until the knife revealed to our minds the Creator's hand in structural beauties that the trained can appreciate, if wicked dunces can't.

"And as to the infirmary, we should have done just what we did at Zurich. We held a little aloof from the male patients, unless some good-natured lecturer, or pupil, gave us a signal, and then we came forward. If we came uninvited, we always stood behind the male students: but we did crowd round the beds of the female patients, and claimed the inner row: AND, SIR, THEY THANKED GOD FOR US OPENLY.

"A few awkward revelations were made during this discussion. A medical student had the candor to write, and say that he had been at a lecture, and the professor had told an indelicate story, and, finding it palatable to his modest males, had said, 'There, gentlemen; now, if

female students were admitted here, I could not have told you this amusing circumstance.' So that it was our purifying influence he dreaded in secret, though he told the public he dreaded the reverse.

"Again, female patients wrote to the journals, to beg that female students might be admitted to come between them and the brutal curiosity of the male students, to which they were subjected in so offensive a way, that more than one poor creature declared she had felt agonies of shame, even in the middle of an agonizing operation.

"This, being a cry from that public for whose sake the whole clique of physicians — male and female — exists, had, of course, no great weight in the union controversy.

"But, sir, if grave men and women will sit calmly down, and fling dirt upon every woman who shall aspire to medicine in an island — though she can do so on a neighboring continent with honor — and choose their time when the dirt can only fall on seven known women — since the female students in that island are only seven — the pretended generality becomes a cowardly personality, and wounds as such, and excites less cold-hearted, and more hot-headed, blackguards to outrage. It was so at Philadelphia, and it was so at Edinburgh.

"Our extra-mural teacher in anatomy was about to give a competitive examination. Now, on these occasions, we were particularly obnoxious. Often and clearly as it had been proved, by *à priori* reasoning, that we *must* be infinitely inferior to the average male, we persisted in proving, by hard fact, that we *were* infinitely his superior; and every examination gave us an opportunity of crushing solid reasons under hollow fact.

"A band of medical students determined that, for once, *à priori* reasoning should have fair play, and not be crushed by a thing so illusory as fact. Accordingly,

they got the gates closed, and collected round them. We came up, one after another, and were received with hisses, groans, and abusive epithets.

"This mode of reasoning must have been admirably adapted to my weak understanding; for it convinced me at once I had no business there; and I was for private study directly.

"But, sir, you know the ancients said, 'Better is an army of stags with a lion for their leader than an army of lions with a stag for their leader.' Now, it so happened that we had a lioness for our leader. She pushed manfully through the crowd, and hammered at the door; then we crept quaking after. She ordered those inside to open the gates; and some student took shame, and did. In marched our lioness, crept after by her—her"—

"Her cubs."

"A thousand thanks, good sir. Her does. On second thoughts, 'her hinds.' Doe is the female of buck; now I said stags. Well, the ruffians who had undertaken to teach us modesty swarmed in, too. They dragged a sheep into the lecture-room, lighted pipes, produced bottles, drank, smoked, and abused us ladies to our faces, and interrupted the lecturer at intervals with their howls and ribaldry, that was intended to show the professor he should not be listened to any more if he admitted the female students. The affair got wind, and other students, not connected with medicine, came pouring in, with no worse motive, probably, than to see the lark. Some of these, however, thought the introduction of the sheep unfair to so respected a lecturer, and proceeded to remove her; but the professor put up his hand, and said, 'Oh, don't remove *her;* she is superior in intellect to many persons here present.'

"At the end of the lecture, thinking us in actual danger from these ruffians, he offered to let us out by a

side door; but our lioness stood up, and said, in a voice that rings in my ear even now, 'Thank you, sir; no. There are *gentlemen* enough here to escort us safely.'

"The magic of a great word from a great heart at certain moments when minds are heated! At that word, sir, the scales fell from a hundred eyes; manhood awoke with a start, ay, and chivalry too. Fifty manly fellows were round us in a moment, with glowing cheeks and eyes, and they carried us all home to our several lodgings in triumph; the cowardly caitiffs of the trades-union howled outside, and managed to throw a little dirt upon our gowns, and also hurled epithets, most of which were new to me; but it has since been stated, by persons more versed in the language of the *canaille*, that no fouler terms are known to the dregs of mankind.

"Thus did the immodest sex, in the person of the medical student, outrage seven fair samples of the modest sex — to teach them modesty.

"Next morning the police magistrates dealt with a few of our teachers — inflicted severe rebukes on them, and feeble fines.

"The craftier elders disowned the riot in public, but approved it in private; and continued to act in concert with it, only with cunning, not violence. *It caused no honest revulsion of feeling*, except in the disgusted public, and they had no power to help us.

"The next incident was a stormy debate, by the subscribers to the infirmary; and here we had a little feminine revenge, which, outraged as we had been, I hope you will not grudge us.

"Our lioness subscribed five pounds, and became entitled to vote and speech. As the foulest epithets had been hurled at her by the union, and a certain professor had told her, to her face, no respectable woman would come to him, and propose to study medicine, she said,

publicly, that she had come to his opinion, and respectable women would avoid him, — which caused a laugh.

"She also gave a venerable old physician, our bitter opponent, a slap that was not quite so fair. His attendant had been concerned in that outrage, and she assumed — in which she was not justified — that the old doctor approved. 'To be sure,' said she, 'they say he was intoxicated, and that is the only possible excuse.'

"The old doctor had only to say that he did not control his assistants in the street; and his own mode of conducting the opposition, and his long life of honor, were there to correct this young woman's unworthy surmises, and she would have had to apologize for going too far on mere surmise. But, instead of that, he was so injudicious as to accuse her of foul language, and say, 'My attendant is a perfect gentleman; he would not be my attendant if he were not.'

"Our lioness had him directly. 'Oh,' said she, 'if Dr. So-and-So prefers to say that his attendant committed that outrage on decency, when in his sober senses, I am quite content.'

"This was described as violent invective by people with weak memories, who had forgotten the nature of the outrage our lioness was commenting on; but, in truth, it was only superior skill in debate, with truth to back it.

"For my part, I kept the police report at the time, and have compared it with her speech — the judicial comments on those rioters are far more severe than hers. The truth is, it was her facts that hit too hard, not her expressions.

"Well, sir, she obtained a majority; and those managers of the infirmary, who objected to female students, were dismissed, and others elected. At the same meeting the Court of Contributors passed a statute, making

it the law of the infirmary that students should be admitted without regard to sex.

"But as to the mere election of managers, the other party demanded a scrutiny of the votes, and instructive figures came out. There voted with us twenty-eight firms, thirty-one ladies, seven doctors.

"There voted with the union fourteen firms, two ladies, *thirty-seven doctors*, and three *druggists*.

"Thereupon the trades-union, as declared by the figures, alleged that firms ought not to vote. *Nota bene* — they always had voted unchallenged, till they voted for fair play to women.

"The union served the provost with an interdict not to declare the new managers elected.

"We applied for our tickets under the new statute, but were impudently refused, under the plea that the managers must first be consulted; so did the servants of the infirmary defy the masters, in order to exclude us.

"By this time the great desire of women to practise medicine had begun to show itself. Numbers came in, and matriculated; and the pressure on the authorities to keep faith, and relax the deadlock they had put us in, was great.

"Thereupon the authorities, instead of saying, 'We have pledged ourselves to a great number of persons, and guided their lives,' took fright, and cast about for juggles. They affected to discover all of a sudden that they had acted illegally in matriculating female students. They would, therefore, not give back their fees, and pay them two hundred pounds apiece for breach of contract, but merely stop their studies until compelled by judicial decision to keep faith. Observe, it was under advice of the Lord Justice-General they had matriculated us, and entered into a contract with us, *for fulfilling which it was not, and is not, in the power of any mortal man to punish them.*

"But these pettifoggers said this: '*We* have acted illegally, and, therefore, not we, but *you*, shall suffer: *we* will *profit* by our illegal act, for we will retain your fees to the University, and your fees to its professors, and rob you of the seed-time of your youth that we have wasted.'

"Now in that country they can get the opinions of the judges by raising what they call an action of declarator.

"One would think it was their business to go to the judges, and meantime give us the benefit of the legal doubt, while it lasted; and of the moral no-doubt, which will last till the day of judgment, and a day after.

"Not a bit of it. They broke their contract with us, refused us the article we had bought of them, and disowned equity, yet shifted the burden of law on to our shoulders. Litigation is long. Possession is nine points. The female students are now sitting with their hands before them, their studies suspended, waiting till time shall show them whether lawyers can pettifog as well as doctors.

"As for me, I had retired to civilized climes long before this. I used to write twice a week to my parents; but I withheld all mention of the outrage at Surgeons' Hall. I knew it would give them useless pain. But in three weeks or so came a letter from my father, unlike any other I ever knew him write. It did not even begin, 'My dear child.' This was what he said, — the words are engraved in my memory: 'Out of that nation of cowards and skunks: out of it this moment, once and forever. The States are your home. Draft on London enclosed. Write to me from France next week, or write to me no more. Graduate in France. Then come north, and sail from Havre to New York. You have done with Britain, and so have I, till our next war. Pray God that mayn't be long!'

"It was like a lion's roar of anguish. I saw my dear father's heart was bursting with agony and rage at the insult to his daughter, and I shed tears for him those wretches had never drawn from me.

"I had cried at being insulted by scholars, in the press; but what was it to me that the scum of the medical profession called me words I did not know the meaning of, and flung the dirt of their streets, and the filth of their souls, after me? I was frightened a little, that is all. But that these reptiles could wound my darling old lion's heart across the ocean — Sir, he was a man who could be keen and even severe with men: but every virtuous woman was a sacred thing to him; had he seen one, though a stranger, insulted as we were, he would have died in her defence; he was a true American. And to think the dregs of mankind could wound him for his daughter, and so near the end of his own dear life. Oh!" She turned her head away.

"My poor girl!" said Vizard, and his own voice was broken.

When he said that, she gave him her hand, and seemed to cling to it a little; but she turned her head away from him, and cried, and even trembled a little.

But she very soon recovered herself, and said she would try to end her story. It had been long enough.

"Sir, my father had often obeyed me: but now I knew I must obey him. I got testimonials in Edinburgh, and started south directly; in a week I was in the south of France. Oh, what a change in people's minds by mere change of place! The professors received me with winning courtesy; some hats were lifted to me in the street, with marked respect: flowers were sent to my lodgings, by gentlemen, who never once intruded on me in person. I was in a civilized land. Yet there was a disappointment for me. I inquired for

Cornelia. The wretch had just gone and married a professor. I feared she was up to no good, by her writing so seldom of late.

"I sent her a line that an old friend had returned, and had not forgotten her, nor our mutual vows.

"She came directly, and was for caressing away her crime, and dissolving it in crocodile tears; but I played the injured friend and the tyrant.

"Then she curled round me, and coaxed, and said: 'Sweetheart, I can advance your interests all the better. You shall be famous for us both. I shall be happier in your success than in my own.'

"In short she made it very hard to hold spite; and it ended in feeble-minded embraces. Indeed she *was* of service to me. I had a favor to ask; I wanted leave to count my Scotch time in France.

"My view was tenable; and Cornelia, by her beauty and her popularity, gained over all the professors to it but one. He stood out.

"Well, sir, an extraordinary occurrence befriended me; no, not extraordinary — unusual.

"I lodged on a second floor. The first floor was very handsome. A young Englishman and his wife took it for a week. She was musical; a real genius. The only woman I ever heard sing without whining; for we are, by nature, the medical and unmusical sex."

"So you said before."

"I know I did; and I mean to keep saying it till people see it. Well, the young man was taken violently and mysteriously ill; had syncope after syncope, and at last ceased to breathe.

"The wife was paralyzed, and sat stupefied, and the people about feared for her reason.

"After a time they begged me to come down and talk to her. Of course I went. I found her with her head

upon his knees. I sat down quietly, and looked at him. He was young and beautiful, but with a feminine beauty. His head finely shaped, with curly locks that glittered in the sun, and one golden lock lighter than the rest. His eyes and eyelashes, his oval face, his white neck, and his white hand, all beautiful. His left hand rested on the counterpane. There was an emerald ring on one finger. He was like some beautiful flower cut down. I can see him now.

"The woman lifted her head and saw me. She had a noble face, though now distorted and wild.

"She cried, 'Tell me he is not dead! tell me he is not dead!' and when I did not reply, the poor creature gave a wild cry, and her senses left her. We carried her into another room.

"Whilst the women were bringing her to, an official came to insist on the interment taking place. They are terribly expeditious in the south of France.

"This caused an altercation; and the poor lady rushed out, and finding the officer peremptory, flung her arms round the body, and said they should not be parted — she would be buried with him.

"The official was moved, but said the law was strict, and the town must conduct the funeral unless she could find the sad courage to give the necessary instructions. With this he was going out, inexorable, when all of a sudden I observed something that sent my heart into my mouth, and I cried 'Arrêtez!' so loud that everybody stared.

"I said, 'You must wait till a physician has seen him; he has moved a finger.'

"I stared at the body, and they all stared at me.

"He *had* moved a finger. When he first saw him his fingers were all close together; but now the little finger was quite away from the third finger, the one with the ring on.

"I felt his heart, and found a little warmth about it but no perceptible pulse. I ordered them to take off his sheet and put on blankets, but not to touch him till I came back with a learned physician. The wife embraced me, all trembling, and promised obedience. I got a *fiacre* and drove to Dr. Brasseur, who was my hostile professor, but very able. I burst on him and told him I had a case of catalepsy for him: it wasn't catalepsy, you know, but physicians are fond of Greek; they prefer the wrong Greek word to the right English. So I call it 'catalepsy,' and said I believed they were going to bury a live man. He shrugged his shoulders, and said that was one of the customs of the country. He would come in an hour. I told him that would not do, the man would be in his coffin; he must come directly. He smiled at my impetuosity, and yielded.

"I got him to the patient. He examined him, and said he might be alive, but feared the last spark was going out. He dared not venture on friction. We must be wary.

"Well, we tried this stimulant, and that, till at last we got a sigh out of the patient; and I shall not forget the scream of joy, at that sigh, which made the room ring, and thrilled us all.

"By and by I was so fortunate as to suggest letting a small stream of water fall from a height on his head and face. We managed that, and by and by were rewarded with a sneeze.

"I think a sneeze must revivify the brain wonderfully, for he made rapid progress, and then we tried friction, and he got well very quick. Indeed, as he had nothing the matter with him, — except being dead, — he got ridiculously well, and began paying us fulsome compliments, the doctor and me.

"So then we handed him to his joyful wife.

"They talk of crying for joy, as if it was done every day. I never saw it but once, and she was the woman. She made a curious gurgle; but it was very pretty. I was glad to have seen it, and very proud to be the cause.

"The next day, that pair left. He was English; and so many good-natured strangers called on him that he fled swiftly, and did not even bid me good-by. However, I was told they both inquired for me, and were sorry I was out when they went."

"How good of them!" said Vizard, turning red.

"Oh, never mind, sir; I made use of *him*. I scribbled an article that very day, entitled it, 'While there's life there's hope,' and rushed with it to the editor of a journal. He took it with delight. I wrote it *à la française*, — picture of the dead husband, mourning wife, the impending interment; effaced myself entirely, and said the wife had refused to bury him until Dr. Brasseur, whose fame had reached her ears, had seen the body. To humor her, the doctor was applied to, and, his benevolence being equal to his science, he came; when lo! a sudden surprise: the swift, unerring eye of science detected some subtle sign that had escaped the lesser luminaries. He doubted the death. He applied remedies. He exhausted the means of his art, with little avail at first, but at last a sigh was elicited, then a sneeze; and, marvellous to relate, in one hour the dead man was sitting up, not convalescent, but well. I concluded with some reflections on this *most important case of suspended animation*, very creditable to the profession of medicine, and Dr. Brasseur."

"There was a fox!"

"Well, look at my hair. What else could you expect? I said that before, too.

"My notice was published, and I sent it to the doctor, with my respects, but did not call on him. However,

one day he met me, and greeted me with a low bow. 'Mademoiselle,' said he, 'you were always a good student; but now you show the spirit of a *confrère*, and so gracefully, that we are *all* agreed we must have you for one as soon as possible.'

"I courtesied, and felt my face red, and said I should be the proudest woman in France.

"'Grand Dieu!' said he, 'I hope not; for your modesty is not the least of your charms.'

"So the way was made smooth, and I had to work hard, and in about fourteen months I was admitted to my final examination. It was a severe one; but I had some advantages. Each nation has its wisdom; and I had studied in various schools.

"Being a linguist, with a trained memory, I occasionally backed my replies with a string of French, German, English, and Italian authorities, that looked imposing.

"In short, I did pass with public applause, and cordial felicitation; they quite *fêted* me. The old welcomed me; the young escorted me home, and flung flowers over me at my door. I reappeared in the balcony, and said a few words of gratitude to them and their noble nation. They cheered, and dispersed.

"My heart was in a glow. I turned my eyes towards New York; a fortnight more, and my parents should greet me as an European doctress, if not a British.

"The excitement had been too great; I sank a little exhausted on the sofa. They brought me a letter. It was black-edged. I tore it open with a scream. My father was dead.

CHAPTER XVI.

"I was prostrated, stupefied. I don't know what I did, or how long I sat there. But Cornelia came to congratulate me, and found me there like a stone, with the letter in my hand. She packed up my clothes, and took me home with her. I made no resistance. I seemed all broken and limp, soul and body, and not a tear that day.

"Oh, sir, how small everything seems beside bereavement! My troubles, my insults, were nothing now; my triumph nothing, for I had no father left to be proud of it with me.

"I wept with anguish a hundred times a day. Why had I left New York? why had I not foreseen this everyday calamity, and passed every precious hour by his side I was to lose?

"Terror seized me. My mother would go next. No life of any value was safe a day. Death did not wait for disease. It killed because it chose, and to show its contempt of hearts.

"But just as I was preparing to go to Havre they brought me a telegram. I screamed at it, and put up my hands. I said, 'No, no;' I would not read it, to be told my mother was dead. I would have her a few minutes longer. Cornelia read it, and said it was from her. I fell on it, and kissed it. The blessed telegram told she was coming home. I was to go to London, and wait for her.

"I started. Cornelia paid my fees, and put my diploma in my box. *I* cared for nothing now but my own flesh and blood, what was left of it, my mother.

"I reached London, and telegraphed my address to my mother, and begged her to come at once and ease my fears. I told her my funds were exhausted, but of course that was not the thing I poured out my heart about; so I dare say she hardly realized my deplorable condition: listless and bereaved, alone in a great city, with no money.

"In her next letter she begged me to be patient. She had trouble with her husband's executors; she would send me a draft as soon as she could; but she would not leave and let her child be robbed.

"By and by the landlady pressed me for money. I gave her my gowns and shawls to sell for me."

"Goose!"

"And just now I was a fox."

"You are both. But so is every woman."

"She handed me a few shillings, by way of balance. I lived on them till they went. Then I starved a little."

"With a ring on your finger you could have pawned for ten guineas!"

"Pawn my ring! My father gave it me." She kissed it tenderly; yet, to Vizard, half defiantly.

"Pawning is not selling, goose," said he, getting angry.

"But I must have parted with it."

"And you preferred to *starve?*"

"I preferred to starve," said she steadily.

He looked at her. Her eyes faced his. He muttered something, and walked away three steps to hide unreasonable sympathy. He came back with a grand display of cheerfulness. "Your mother will be here next month," said he, "with money in both pockets. Meantime I wish you would let me have a finger in the pie, or, rather, my sister. She is warm-hearted and enthusiastic; she shall call on you if you will permit it."

"Is she like you?"

"Not a bit; we are by different mothers. Hers was a Greek, and she is a beautiful dark girl."

"I admire beauty; but is she like you — in — in disposition?"

"Lord! no; very superior. Not abominably clever like you, but absurdly good. You shall judge for yourself. Oblige me with your address."

The doctress wrote her address with a resigned air, as one who had found somebody she had to obey; and, as soon as he had got it, Vizard gave her a sort of nervous shake of the hand, and seemed almost in a hurry to get away from her. But this was his way.

She would have been amazed if she had seen his change of manner the moment he got amongst his own people.

He burst in on them crying, "There, the prayers of this congregation are requested for Harrington Vizard, saddled with a virago."

"Saddled with a virago!" screamed Fanny.

"Saddled with a ——!" sighed Zoe faintly.

"Saddled with a virago FOR LIFE!" shouted Vizard, with a loud defiance, that seemed needless, since nobody was objecting violently to his being saddled.

"Look here," said he, descending all of a sudden to a meek, injured air, which, however, did not last very long; "I was in the garden of Leicester Square, and a young lady turned faint. I observed it, and, instead of taking the hint, and cutting, I offered assistance — off my guard as usual. She declined. I persisted; proposed a glass of wine or spirit. She declined, but at last let out she was starving."

"Oh!" cried Zoe.

"Yes, Zoe, starving. A woman more learned, more scientific, more eloquent, more offensive to a fellow's vanity, than I ever saw, or even read of, — a woman of *genius*, starving, like a genius and a ninny, with a ring

on her finger worth thirty guineas. But my learned goose would not raise money on that, because it was her father's, and he is dead."

"Poor thing!" said Zoe, and her eyes glistened directly.

"It *is* hard, Zoe, isn't it? She is a physician — an able physician; has studied at Zurich, and at Edinburgh, and in France, and has a French diploma, but must not practise in England, because we are behind the Continent in laws and civilization — so *she* says, confound her impudence, and my folly for becoming a woman's echo! But if I were to tell you her whole story, your blood would boil at the trickery, and dishonesty, and oppression of the trades-union which has driven this gifted creature to a foreign school for education, and now that a foreign nation admits her ability and crowns her with honor, still she must not practise in this country because she is a woman and we are a nation of half-civilized men. That is *her* chat, you understand, not mine. We are not obliged to swallow all that; but, turn it how you will, here are learning, genius, and virtue starving. We must get her to accept a little money; that means, in her case, a little fire and food. Zoe, shall that woman go to bed hungry to-night?"

"No; never!" said Zoe, warmly. "Let me think. Offer her a *loan*."

"Well done; that is a good idea. Will *you* undertake it? She will be far more likely to accept. She is a bit of a prude and all, is my virago."

"Yes, dear, she will. Order the carriage. She shall not go to bed hungry — nobody shall that you are interested in."

"Oh, after dinner will do."

Dinner was ordered immediately, and the brougham an hour after.

At dinner, Vizard gave them all the outline of the

Edinburgh struggle, and the *pros* and *cons;* during which narrative his female hearers might have been observed to get cooler and cooler, till they reached the zero of perfect apathy. They listened in dead silence; but, when Harrington had done, Fanny said aside to Zoe, "It is all her own fault. What business have women to set up for doctors?"

"Of course not," said Zoe; "only we must not say so. He indulges *us* in our whims."

Warm partisan of immortal justice, when it was lucky enough to be backed by her affections, Miss Vizard rose directly after dinner, and, with a fine imitation of ardor, said she could lose no more time, — she must go and put on her bonnet. "You will come with me, Fanny?"

When I was a girl; or a boy; I forget which — it is so long ago — a young lady, thus invited by an affectionate friend, used to do one of two things: nine times out of ten she sacrificed her inclination, and went: the tenth, she would make sweet, engaging excuses, and beg off. But the girls of this day have invented "silent volition." When you ask them to do anything they don't quite like, they look you in the face bland but full, and neither speak nor move. Miss Dover was a proficient in this graceful form of refusal by dead silence, and resistance by placid inertia. She just looked like the full moon in Zoe's face, and never budged. Zoe, being also a girl of the day, needed no interpretation. "Oh, very well," said she, "disobliging Thing" — with perfect good-humor, mind you.

Vizard, however, was not pleased.

"You go with her, Ned," said he. "Miss Dover prefers to stay and smoke a cigar with me."

Miss Dover's face reddened, but she never budged. And it ended in Zoe taking Severne with her to call on Rhoda Gale.

Rhoda Gale stayed in the garden till sunset, and then went to her lodgings slowly, for they had no attraction, — a dark room; no supper; a hard landlady, half disposed to turn her out.

Dr. Rhoda Gale never reflected much in the streets; they were to her a field of minute observation; but, when she got home, she sat down and thought over what she had been saying and doing, and puzzled over the character of the man who had relieved her hunger and elicited her autobiography. She passed him in review; settled in her mind that he was a strong character — a manly man, who did not waste words; wondered a little at the way he had made her do whatever he pleased; blushed a little at the thought of having been so communicative; yet admired the man for having drawn her out so; and wondered whether she should see him again. She hoped she should. But she did not feel sure.

She sat half an hour thus — with one knee raised a little, and her hands interlaced — by a fireplace with a burnt-out coal in it; and by and by she felt hungry again. But she had no food, and no money.

She looked hard at her ring, and profited a little by contact with the sturdy good sense of Vizard.

She said to herself, "Men understand one another. I believe father would be angry with me for not."

Then she looked tenderly and wistfully at the ring, and kissed it, and murmured, "Not to-night." You see she hoped she might have a letter in the morning, and so respite her ring.

Then she made light of it, and said to herself, "No matter; *qui dort dîne.*"

But, as it was early for bed, and she could not be long idle, sipping no knowledge, she took up the last good German work that she had bought when she had money, and proceeded to read. She had no candle, but she had

a lucifer match or two, and an old newspaper. With this she made long spills, and lighted one, and read two pages by that paper torch; and lighted another before it was out, and then another, and so on in succession, fighting for knowledge against poverty, as she had fought for it against perfidy.

While she was thus absorbed, a carriage drew up at the door. She took no notice of that; but presently there was a rustling of silk on the stairs, and two voices, and then a tap at the door.

"Come in," said she, — and Zoe entered just as the last spill burned out.

Rhoda Gale rose in a dark room; but a gaslight over the way just showed her figure. "Miss Gale?" said Zoe, timidly.

"I am Miss Gale," said Rhoda, quietly, but firmly.

"I am Miss Vizard, the gentleman's sister, that you met in Leicester Square to-day;" and she took a cautious step towards her.

Rhoda's cheeks burned.

"Miss Vizard," she said, "excuse my receiving you so; but you may have heard I am very poor. My last candle is gone. But perhaps the landlady would lend me one. I don't know. She is very disobliging, and very cruel."

"Then she shall not have the honor of lending you a candle," said Zoe, with one of her gushes. "Now, to tell the truth," said she, altering to the cheerful, "I'm rather glad. I would rather talk to you in the dark, for a little, just at first. May I?" By this time she had gradually crept up to Rhoda.

"I am afraid you *must*," said Rhoda. "But, at least, I can offer you a seat."

Zoe sat down, and there was an awkward silence.

"Oh, dear," said Zoe; "I don't know how to begin. I

wish you would give me your hand, as I can't see your face."

"With all my heart; there."

(Almost in a whisper) "He has told me."

Rhoda put the other hand to her face, though it was so dark.

"Oh, Miss Gale, how *could* you? Only think! Suppose you had killed yourself, or made yourself very ill. Your mother would have come directly and found you so; and only think how unhappy you would have made her!"

"Can I have forgotten my mother?" asked Rhoda of herself, but aloud.

"Not wilfully, I am sure. But you know geniuses are not always wise in these little things. They want some good humdrum soul to advise them in the common affairs of life. That want is supplied you now, for I am here: ha! ha!"

"You are no more commonplace than I am; much less now, I'll be bound."

"We will put that to the test," said Zoe, adroitly enough. "*My* view of all this is — that here is a young lady in want of money *for a time*, as everybody is, now and then, and that the sensible course is to borrow some, till your mother comes over with her apron full of dollars. Now I have twenty pounds to lend, and if you are so mighty sensible as you say, you won't refuse to borrow it."

"Oh, Miss Vizard, you are very good; but I am afraid and ashamed to borrow. I never did such a thing."

"Time you began, then. *I* have — often. But it is no use arguing. You *must*, or you will get poor me finely scolded. Perhaps he was on his good behavior with you, being a stranger; but at home they expect to be obeyed. He will be sure to say it was my stupidity, and that *he* would have made you directly."

"Do tell!" cried Rhoda, surprised into an idiom; "as if I'd have taken money from *him*."

"Why, of course not; but between *us* it is nothing at all. There;" and she put the money in Rhoda's hand, and then held both hand and money rather tightly imprisoned in her larger palm; and began to chatter, so as to leave the other no opening. "Oh, blessed darkness, how easy it makes things! does it not? I am glad there was no candle; we should have been fencing and blushing ever so long, and made such a fuss about nothing — and" —

This prattle was interrupted by Rhoda Gale putting her right wrist round Zoe's neck, and laying her forehead on her shoulder with a little sob. So then they both distilled the inevitable dewdrops.

But as Rhoda was not much given that way, she started up, and said, "Darkness? no; I must see the face that has come here to help me, and not humiliate me. That is the first use I'll make of the money. I am afraid you are rather plain, or you couldn't be so good as all this."

"No," said Zoe, "I'm not reckoned plain. Only as black as a coal."

"All the more to my taste," said Rhoda, and flew out of the room, and nearly stumbled over a figure seated on a step of the staircase. "Who are you?" said she, sharply.

"My name is Severne."

"And what are you doing there?"

"Waiting for Miss Vizard."

"Come in, then."

"She told me not."

"Then I tell you *to*. The idea! Miss Vizard!"

"Yes."

"Please have Mr. Severne in. Here he is, sitting — like grief — on the steps. I will soon be back."

She flew to the landlady. "Mrs. Grip, I want a candle."

"Well, the shops are open," said the woman, rudely.

"Oh, I have no time. Here is a sovereign. Please give me two candles directly, candlesticks and all."

The woman's manner changed directly.

"You shall have them this moment, miss, and my own candlesticks, which they are plated."

She brought them, and advised her only to light one. "They don't carry well, miss," said she. "They are wax — or summat."

"Then they are summat," said Miss Gale, after a single glance at their composition.

"I'll make you a nice hot supper, miss, in half an hour," said the woman, maternally, as if she was going to *give* it her.

"No, thank you. Bring me a twopenny loaf, and a scuttle of coals."

"La, miss! no more than that — out of a sov'?"

"Yes — THE CHANGE."

Having shown Mrs. Grip her father was a Yankee, she darted up-stairs with her candles. Zoe came to meet her, and literally dazzled her.

Rhoda stared at her with amazement and growing rapture. "Oh, you beauty!" she cried, and drank her in from head to foot.

"Well," said she, drawing a long breath, "Nature, you have turned out a *com*-plete article this time, I reckon." Then, as Severne laughed merrily at this, she turned her candle and her eyes full on him very briskly. She looked at him for a moment, with a gratified eye at his comeliness; then she started. "Oh!" she cried.

He received the inspection merrily, till she uttered that ejaculation; then he started a little, and stared at her.

"We have met before," said she, almost tenderly.

"Have we?" said he, putting on a mystified air.

She fixed him, and looked him through and through. "You — don't — remember — me?" asked she. Then, after giving him plenty of time to answer, "Well, then, I must be mistaken;" and her words seemed to freeze themselves and her as they fell.

She turned her back on him, and said to Zoe, with a good deal of sweetness and weight, "I have lived to see goodness and beauty united. I will never despair of human nature."

This was too point-blank for Zoe; she blushed crimson, and said, archly, "I think it is time for me to run. Oh, but I forgot! here is my card; we are all at that hotel. If I am so very attractive, you will come and see me. We leave town very soon; will you?"

"I will," said Rhoda.

"And since you took me for an old acquaintance, I hope you will treat me as one," said Severne, with consummate grace and assurance.

"I will, *sir*," said she, icily, and with a marvellous curl of the lip that did not escape him.

She lighted them down the stairs, gazed after Zoe, and ignored Severne altogether.

CHAPTER XVII.

Going home in the carriage Zoe was silent, but Severne talked nineteen to the dozen. Had his object been to hinder his companion's mind from dwelling too long on one thing, he could not have rattled the dice of small-talk more industriously. His words would fill pages; his topics were that Miss Gale was an extraordinary woman, but too masculine for his taste, and had made her own troubles setting up doctress, when her true line was governess — for boys. He was also glib and satirical upon that favorite butt, a friend.

"Who but a *soi-disant* woman-hater would pick up a strange virago, and send his sister to her with twenty pounds? I'll tell you what it is, Miss Vizard" —

Here Miss Vizard, who had sat dead silent under a flow of words, which is merely indicated above, laid her hand on his arm to stop the flux for a moment, and said, quietly, "*Do* you know her? tell me!"

"Know her! how should I?"

"I thought you might have met her — abroad."

"Well, it is possible, of course, but very unlikely. If I did, I never spoke to her, or I should have remembered her. *Don't you think so?*"

"She seemed very positive; and I think she is an accurate person. She seemed quite surprised and mortified when you said 'No.'"

"Well, you know, of course it *is* a mortifying thing when a lady claims a gentleman's acquaintance, and the gentleman doesn't admit it. But what could I do? I couldn't tell a lie about it — could I?"

"Of course not."

"I was off my guard, and rudish; but you were not. What tact! — what delicacy! — what high breeding and angelic benevolence! — and so clever too!"

"Oh, fie! you listened!"

"You left the door ajar, and I could not bear to lose a word that dropped from those lips so near me. Yes, I listened, and got such a lesson as only a noble, gentle lady could give. I shall never forget your womanly art, and the way you contrived to make the benefaction sound nothing. 'We are all of us at low water in turns, and for a time, especially me, Zoe Vizard; so here's a trifling loan.' A loan! — you'll never see a shilling of it again! No matter. What do angels want of money?"

"Oh, pray," said Zoe, "you make me blush."

"Then I wish there was more light to see it — yes, an angel; do you think I can't see you have done all this for a lady you do not really approve? Fancy! A she-doctor!"

"My dear friend," said Zoe, with a little juvenile pomposity, "one ought not to judge one's intellectual superiors hastily, and this lady is ours;" then gliding back to herself — "and it is my nature to approve what those I love approve; when it is not downright wrong, you know."

"Oh, of course, it is not wrong; but is it wise?"

Zoe did not answer: the question puzzled her.

"Come," said he, "I'll be frank, and speak out in time. I don't think you know your brother Harrington. He is very inflammable."

"Inflammable! — what! Harrington? Well, yes — for I've seen smoke issue from his mouth — ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha! I'll pass that off for mine some day when you are not by. But, seriously, your brother is the very

man to make a fool of himself with a certain kind of woman. He despises the whole sex — in theory; and he is very hard upon ordinary women, and does not appreciate their good qualities. But, when he meets a remarkable woman, he catches fire like tow. He fell in love with Mademoiselle Klosking."

"Oh! not in love."

"I beg your pardon. Now this is between you and me; he was in love with her, — madly in love. He was only saved by our coming away. If those two had met, and made acquaintance, he would have been at her mercy. I don't say any harm would have come of it, but I do say that would have depended on the woman, and not on the man."

Zoe looked very serious, and said nothing. But her long silence showed him his words had told.

"And now," said he, after a judicious pause, "here is another remarkable woman; the last in the world I should fancy — or Vizard either, perhaps, if he met her in society. But the whole thing occurs in the way to catch him. He finds a lady fainting with hunger. He feeds her; and that softens his heart to her. Then she tells him the old story — victim of the world's injustice — and he is deeply interested in her. She can see that; she is as keen as a razor. If those two meet a few more times, he will be at her mercy: and then she will throw physic to the dogs, and jump at a husband six feet high, and twelve thousand acres. I don't study women with a microscope, as our woman-hater does; but I notice a few things about them; and one is that their eccentricities all give way at the first offer of marriage. I believe they are only adopted in desperation, to get married. What beautiful woman is ever eccentric? Catch her; she can get a husband without. That doctress will prescribe Harrington a wedding-ring; and, if he swallows

it, it will be her last prescription; she will send out for the family doctor after that, like other wives."

"You alarm me," said Zoe. "Pray do not make me unjust. This is a lady with a fine mind; and not a designing woman."

"Oh, I don't say she has laid any plans; but these things are always extemporized the moment the chance comes. You can count beforehand on the instincts of every woman who is clever and needy, and on Vizard's peculiar weakness for women out of the common. He is hard upon the whole sex; but he is no match for individuals. He owns as much himself. You are not angry with me?"

"No, no. Angry with *you?*"

"It is you I think of in all this. He is a fine fellow, and you are proud of him. I wouldn't have him marry to mortify you. For myself, while the sister honors me with her regard, I really don't much care who has the brother and the acres. I have the best of the bargain."

Zoe disputed this — in order to make him say it several times.

He did, and proved it in terms that made her cheeks red with modesty and gratified pride; and by the time they had got home, he had flattered everything but pride, love, and happiness, out of her heart, poor girl.

The world is like the law, full of implied contracts; we give and take, without openly agreeing to: subtle Severne counted on this, and was not disappointed; Zoe rewarded him for his praises, and her happiness, by falling into his views about Rhoda Gale. Only she did it in her own ladylike way, and not plump.

She came up to Harrington, and kissed him, and said, "Thank you, dear, for sending me on a good errand. I found her in a very mean apartment, without fire or candle."

"I thought as much," said Vizard. "Did she take the money?"

"Yes; as a loan."

"Make any difficulties?"

"A little, dear."

Severne put in his word. "Now, if you want to know all the tact and delicacy with which it was done, you must come to me; for Miss Vizard is not going to give you any idea of it."

"Be quiet, sir, or I shall be very angry. I lent her the money, dear, and her troubles are at an end; for her mother will certainly join her before she has spent your twenty pounds. Oh, and she had not parted with her ring; that is a comfort, is it not?"

"You are a good-hearted girl, Zoe," said Vizard, approvingly; then, recovering himself, "but don't you be blinded by sentiment. She deserves a good hiding for not parting with her ring. Where is the sense of starving, with thirty pounds on your finger?"

Zoe smiled, and said his words were harder than his deeds.

"Because he doesn't mean a word he says," put in Fanny Dover, uneasy at the long cessation of her tongue, for all conversation with Don Cigar had proved impracticable.

"Are you there still, my Lady Disdain?" said Vizard. "I thought you were gone to bed."

"You might well think that. I had nothing to keep me up."

Said Zoe, rather smartly, "Oh, yes, you had — curiosity;" then, turning to her brother, "in short, you may make your mind quite easy. You have lent your money, or given it, to a worthy person, but a little wrong-headed. However" — with a telegraphic glance at Severne — "she is very accomplished; a linguist; she need never

be in want; and she will soon have her mother to help her and advise her: perhaps Mrs. Gale has an income; if not, Miss Gale, with her abilities, will easily find a place in some house of business, or else take to teaching. If I was them I would set up a school."

Unanimity is rare in this world: but Zoe's good sense carried every vote. Her prompter, Severne, nodded approval. Fanny said, "Why, of course;" and Vizard, who, it was feared, might prove refractory, assented even more warmly than the others. "Yes," said he, "that will be the end of it. You relieve me of a weight. Really, when she told me that fable of learning maltreated, honorable ambition punished, justice baffled by trickery, and virtue vilified, and did not cry like the rest of you, except at her father dying in New York the day she won her diploma at Montpellier, I forgave the poor girl her petticoats — indeed I lost sight of them: she seemed to me a very brave little fellow, damnably ill used; and I said, 'This is not to be borne; here is a fight, and justice down under dirty feet.' What, ho!" — (roaring at the top of his voice.)

Zoe and Fanny (screaming and pinching each other). "Ah! ah!"

"Vizard to the rescue!"

"But, with the evening, cool reflection came. A sister, youthful, but suddenly sagacious (with a gleam of suspicion), very suddenly, has stilled the waves of romance, and the lips of beauty have uttered common-sense. Shall they utter it in vain? Never! It may be years before they do it again. We must not slight rare phenomena. Zoe *locuta est.* Eccentricity must be suppressed. Doctresses, warned by a little starvation, must take the world as it is, and teach little girls and boys languages, and physic them with arithmetic and the globes: these be drugs that do not kill; they only

make life a burden. I don't think we have laid out our twenty pounds badly, Zoe, and there is an end of it. The incident is emptied, as the French say, and (lighting bed-candles) the ladies retire with the honors of war. Zoe has uttered good sense, and Miss Dover has done the next best thing, she has said very little" —

Miss Dover shot in contemptuously, "I had no companion" —

"For want of a fool to speak her mind to."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Ingenious Mr. Severne having done his best to detach the poor doctress from Vizard and his family, in which the reader probably discerns his true motive, now bent his mind on slipping back to Homburg and looking after his money. Not that he liked the job: to get hold of it he knew he must condense rascality; he must play the penitent, the lover, and the scoundrel, over again, all in three days.

Now, though his egotism was brutal, he was human in this, that he had plenty of good-nature skin-deep, and superficial sensibilities, which made him shrink a little from this hot-pressed rascality and barbarity. On the other hand, he was urged by poverty, and, laughable as it may appear, by jealousy. He had observed that the best of women, if they are not only abandoned by him they love, but also flattered and adored by scores, will sometimes yield to the joint attacks of desolation, pique, vanity, etc.

In this state of fluctuation he made up his mind so far as this: he would manage so as to be able to go.

Even this demanded caution. So he began by throwing out, in a seeming careless way, that he ought to go down into Huntingdonshire.

"Of course you ought," said Vizard.

No objection was taken, and they rather thought he would go next day. But that was not his game. It would never do to go whilst they were in London. So he kept postponing, and saying he would not tear himself away; and at last, the day before they were to go

down to Barfordshire, he affected to yield to a remonstrance of Vizard, and said he would see them off, then run down to Huntingdonshire, look into his affairs, and cross the country to Barfordshire.

"You might take Homburg on the way," said Fanny, out of fun — *her* fun — not really meaning it.

Severne cast a piteous glance at Zoe. "For shame, Fanny!" said she. "And why put Homburg into his head?"

"When I had forgotten there was such a place," said Mr. Severne, taking his cue dexterously from Zoe, and feigning innocent amazement. Zoe colored with pleasure. This was at breakfast. At afternoon tea something happened. The ladies were up-stairs packing, an operation on which they can bestow as many hours as the thing needs minutes. One servant brought in the tea; another came in soon after with a card, and said it was for Miss Vizard; but he brought it to Harrington. He read it:

"Miss Rhoda Gale, M.D."

"Send it up to Miss Vizard," said he. The man was going out: he stopped him, and said, "You can show the lady in here, all the same."

Rhoda Gale was ushered in. She had a new gown and bonnet, not showy, but very nice. She colored faintly at sight of the two gentlemen; but Vizard soon put her at her ease. He shook hands with her, and said, — "Sit down, Miss Gale; my sister will soon be here. I have sent your card up to her."

"Shall I tell her?" said Severne, with the manner of one eager to be agreeable to the visitor.

"If you please, sir," said Miss Gale.

Severne went out zealously, darted up to Zoe's room, knocked, and said — "Pray come down: here is that doctress."

Meantime Jack was giving Jill the card, and Jill was giving it to Mary to give to the lady. It got to Zoe's room in a quarter of an hour.

"Any news from mamma?" asked Vizard, in his blunt way.

"Yes, sir."

"Good news?"

"No. My mother writes me that I must not expect her. She has to fight with a dishonest executor. Oh, money, money!"

At that moment Zoe entered the room, but Severne paced the landing. He did not care to face Miss Gale; and even in that short interval of time he had persuaded Zoe to protect her brother against this formidable young lady, and shorten the interview if she could.

So Zoe entered the room bristling with defence of her brother. At sight of her, Miss Gale rose, and her features literally shone with pleasure. This was rather disarming to one so amiable as Zoe, and she was surprised into smiling sweetly in return; but still her quick defensive eye drank Miss Gale on the spot, and saw, with alarm, the improvement in her appearance. She was very healthy, as indeed she deserved to be; for she was singularly temperate, drank nothing but water and weak tea without sugar, and never ate nor drank except at honest meals. Her youth and pure constitution had shaken off her late pallor, and the pleasure of seeing Zoe lent her a lovely color. Zoe microscoped her in one moment: not one beautiful feature in her whole face; eyes full of intellect, but not in the least love-darting; nose, an aquiline steadily reversed; mouth, vastly expressive, but large; teeth, even and white, but ivory, not pearl; chin, ordinary; head symmetrical, and set on with grace. I may add, to complete the picture, that she had a way of turning this head, clean, swift, and bird-like, without

turning her body. That familiar action of hers was fine — so full of fire and intelligence.

Zoe settled in one moment that she was downright plain, but might probably be that mysterious and incomprehensible and dangerous creature, "a gentleman's beauty," which, to women, means no beauty at all, but a witch-like creature, that goes and hits foul, and eclipses real beauty, doll's to wit, by some mysterious magic.

"Pray sit down," said Zoe, formally. Rhoda sat down and hesitated a moment. She felt a frost.

Vizard helped her — "Miss Gale has heard from her mother."

"Yes, Miss Vizard," said Rhoda timidly: "and very bad news. She cannot come at present; and I am so distressed at what I have done in borrowing that money of you: and see, I have spent nearly three pounds of it in dress; but I have brought the rest back."

Zoe looked at her brother perplexed.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Vizard; "you will not take it, Zoe."

"Oh, yes; if you please, do," said Rhoda still to Zoe. "When I borrowed it, I felt sure I could repay it; but it is not so now. My mother says it may be months before she can come, and she forbids me positively to go to her. Oh! but for that I'd put on boy's clothes and go as a common sailor to get to her."

Vizard fidgeted on his chair.

"I suppose I mustn't go in a passion," said he, dryly.

"Who cares?" said Miss Gale, turning her head sharply on him the way I have tried to describe.

"I care," said Vizard. "I find wrath interfere with my digestion. Please go on, and tell us what your mother says. She has more common-sense than somebody else I won't name — politeness forbids."

"Well, who doubts that?" said the lady, with frank

good-humor. "Of course, she has more sense than any of us. Well, my mother says — oh, Miss Vizard!"

"No, she doesn't, now. She never heard the name of Vizard."

Miss Gale was in no humor for feeble jokes. She turned half angrily away from him to Zoe. "She says I have been well educated, and know languages; and we both are under a cloud, and I had better give up all thought of medicine, and take to teaching."

"Well, Miss Gale," said Zoe, "if you ask *me*, I must say I think it is good advice. With all your gifts, how can you fight the world? We are all interested in you here; and it is a curious thing, but do you know we agreed the other day you would have to give up medicine, and fall into some occupation in which there are many ladies already to keep you in countenance. Teaching was mentioned, I think; was it not, Harrington?"

Rhoda Gale sighed deeply.

"I am not surprised," said she. "Most women of the world think with you. But oh, Miss Vizard, please take into account all that I have done and suffered for medicine. Is all that to go for *nothing?* Think what a bitter thing it must be to do, and then to undo — to labor and study, and then knock it all down; to cut a slice out of one's life — out of the very heart of it — and throw it clean away. I know it is hard for you to enter into the feelings of any one who loves science and is told to desert it. But suppose you had loved a *man* you were proud of — loved him for five years — and then they came to you and said, 'There are difficulties in the way; he is as worthy as ever, and he will never desert *you;* but you must give *him* up, and try and get a taste for human rubbish; it will only be five years of wasted life, wasted youth, wasted seed-time, wasted affection, and then a long vegetable life of unavailing regrets.' I love

science as other women love men. If I am to give up science, why not die? Then I shall not feel my loss; and I know how to die without pain. Oh! the world is cruel. Ah! I am too unfortunate! Everybody else is rewarded for patience, prudence, temperance, industry, and a life with high and almost holy aims; but I am punished, afflicted, crushed under the injustice of the day. Do not make me a nursemaid. I *won't* be a governess; and I must not die, because that would grieve my mother. Have pity on me!—have pity!"

She trembled all over, and stretched out her hands to Zoe with truly touching supplication.

Zoe forgot her part, or lost the power to play it well. She turned her head away, and would not assent: but two large tears rolled out of her beautiful eyes. Miss Gale, who had risen in the ardor of her appeal, saw that, and it set her off. She leaned her brow against the mantelpiece, not like a woman, but a brave boy that does not want to be seen crying; and she faltered out, "In France I am a learned physician: and here to be a housemaid! for I won't live on borrowed money. I am very unfortunate."

Severne, who had lost patience, came swiftly in, and found them in this position, and Vizard walking impatiently about the room in a state of emotion, which he was pleased to call anger.

Zoe, in a tearful voice, said, "I am unable to advise you. It is very hard that any one so deserving should be degraded."

Vizard burst out, "It is harder the world should be so full of conventional sneaks; and that I was very near making one of them. The last thing we ever think of, in this paltry world, is justice, and it ought to be the first. Well, for once I have got the power to be just, and just I'll be, by God! Come, leave off snivelling, you

two, and take a lesson in justice — from a beginner; converts are always the hottest, you know. Miss Gale, you shall not be driven out of science, and your life and labor wasted. You shall doctor Barfordshire, and teach it English, too, if any woman can. This is the programme. I farm two hundred acres — *vicariously*, of course. Nobody in England has brains to do anything *himself*. That weakness is confined to your late father's country, and they suffer for it by out-fighting, out-lying, out-manœuvring, out-bullying, and out-witting us whenever we encounter them. Well, the farmhouse is large. The bailiff has no children: there is a wing furnished, and not occupied. You shall live there, with the right of cutting vegetables, roasting chickens, sucking eggs, and riding a couple of horses off their legs."

"But what am I to do for all that?"

"Oh, only the work of two men. You must keep my house in perfect health. The servants have a trick of eating till they burst. You will have to sew them up again. There are only seven hundred people in the village. You must cure them all; and, if you do, I promise you their lasting ingratitude. Outside the village, you must make them pay — *if you can*. We will find you patients of every degree. But whether you will ever get any fees out of them, this deponent saith not. However, I can answer for the *ladies* of our county, that they will all cheat you — if they can."

Miss Gale's color came and went, and her eyes sparkled. "Oh, how good you are! Is there a hospital?"

"County hospital, and infirmary, within three miles. Fine country for disease. Intoxication prevalent, leading to a bountiful return of accidents. I promise you wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, and everything to make you comfortable."

"Oh, don't laugh at me. I am so afraid I shall — no,

I hope I shall not disgrace you. And then it is against the law: but I don't mind that."

"Of course not; what is the law to ladies with elevated views? By the by, what is the penalty? — six months?"

"Oh no. Twenty pounds. Oh, dear! another twenty pounds!"

"Make your mind easy. Unjust laws are a dead letter, on a soil so primitive as ours. I shall talk to Uxmoor, and a few more, and no magistrate will ever summons you, nor jury convict you, in Barfordshire. You will be as safe there as in Upper Canada. Now then — attend. We leave for Barfordshire to-morrow. You will go down on the first of next month. By that time all will be ready: start for Taddington, eleven o'clock. You will be met at the Taddington station, and taken to your farmhouse. You will find a fire ten days old, and, for once in your life, young lady, you will find an aired bed; because my man Harris will be housemaid, and not let one of your homicidal sex set foot in the crib."

Miss Gale looked from Vizard to his sister, like a person in a dream. She was glowing with happiness; but it did not spoil her. She said, humbly and timidly, "I hope I may prove worthy."

"That is *your* business," said Vizard, with supreme indifference; "mine is to be just. Have a cup of tea?"

"Oh, no; thank you! and it will be a part of my duty to object to afternoon tea. But I am afraid none of you will mind me."

After a few more words, in which Severne, seeing Vizard was in one of his iron moods, and immovable as him of Rhodes, affected now to be a partisan of the new arrangement — Miss Gale rose to retire. Severne ran before her to the door, and opened it, as to a queen.

She bowed formally to him, as she went out; when she was on the other side the door, she turned her head in her sharp fiery way, and pointed with her finger to the emerald ring on his little finger, a very fine one — "Changed hands," said she; "it was on the third finger of your left hand when we met last;" and she passed down the stairs with a face half turned to him, and a cruel smile.

Severne stood fixed, looking after her. Cold crept among his bones; he was roused by a voice above him, saying very inquisitively, "What does she say?" He looked up, and it was Fanny Dover, leaning over the balusters of the next landing. She had evidently seen all, and heard some: Severne had no means of knowing how much. His heart beat rapidly. Yet he told her, boldly, that the doctress had admired his emerald ring. As if to give greater force to this explanation, he took it off, and showed it her, very amicably. He calculated that she could hardly, at that distance, have heard every syllable, and, at the same time, he was sure she had seen Miss Gale point at the ring.

"Hum!" said Fanny, and that was all she said.

Severne went to his own room to think. He was almost dizzy. He dreaded this Rhoda Gale. She was incomprehensible, and held a sword over his head. Tongues go fast in the country. At the idea of this keen girl and Zoe Vizard sitting under a tree for two hours, with nothing to do but talk, his blood ran cold. Surely Miss Gale must hate him. She would not always spare him. For once he could not see his way clear. Should he tell her half the truth, and throw himself on her mercy? Should he make love to her? or what should he do? One thing he saw clear enough: he must not quit the field. Sooner or later, all would depend on his presence, his tact, and his ready wit.

He felt like a man who could not swim, and wades in deepening water. He must send somebody to Homburg, or abandon all thought of his money. Why abandon it? Why not return to Ina Klosking? His judgment, alarmed at the accumulating difficulties, began to intrude its voice. What was he turning his back on? A woman, lovely, loving, and celebrated, who was very likely pining for him, and would share not only her winnings at play with him, but the large income she would make by her talent. What was he following? A woman divinely lovely and good, but whom he could not possess, or, if he did, could not hold her long, and whose love must end in horror.

But nature is not so unfair to honest men, as to give wisdom to the cunning. Rarely does reason prevail against passion in such a mind as Severne's. It ended, as might have been expected, in his going down to Vizard Court with Zoe.

An express train soon whirled them down to Taddington, in Barfordshire. There was Harris, with three servants, waiting for them, — one with a light cart for their luggage, and two with an open carriage and two spanking bays, whose coats shone like satin. The servants — liveried, and top-booted, and buckskin-gloved, and spruce as if just out of a bandbox — were all smartness and respectful zeal. They got the luggage out in a trice, with Harris's assistance. Mr. Harris then drove away like the wind in his dog-cart; the travelling party were soon in the barouche. It glided away, and they rolled on easy springs at the rate of twelve miles an hour till they came to the lodge-gate. It was opened at their approach, and they drove full half a mile over a broad gravel path, with rich grass on each side, and grand old patriarchs, oak and beech, standing here and there, and dappled deer grazing or lying in mottled

groups, till they came to a noble avenue of lofty lime-trees, with stems of rare size and smoothness, and towering piles on piles of translucent leaves, that glowed in the sun like flakes of gold.

At the end of this avenue was seen an old mansion, built of that beautiful clean red brick —which seems to have died out — and white stone facings and mullions, with gables and oriel windows by the dozen; but between the avenue and the house was a very large oval plot of turf, with a broad gravel road running round it; and attached to the house, but thrown a little back, were the stables, which formed three sides of a good-sized quadrangle, with an enormous clock in the centre. The lawn, kitchen-garden, ice-houses, pineries, greenhouses, revealed themselves only in peeps as the carriage swept round the spacious plot, and drew up at the hall-door.

No ringing of bells nor knocking. Even as the coachman tightened his reins, the great hall-door was swung open, and two footmen appeared. Harris brought up a rear-guard, and received the party in due state.

A double staircase, about ten feet broad, rose out of the hall, and up this Mr. Harris conducted Severne, the only stranger, into a bedroom with a great oriel window looking west.

"This is your room, sir," said he. "Shall I unpack your things when they come?"

Severne assented, and that perfect major-domo informed him that luncheon was ready, and retired, cat-like, and closed the door so softly, no sound was heard.

Mr. Severne looked about him, and admitted to himself that, with all his experiences of life, this was his first bedroom. It was of great size, to begin. The oriel window was twenty feet wide, and had half a dozen casements, each with rose-colored blinds, though some of them needed no blinds, for green creepers, with flowers

like clusters of grapes, curled round the mullions, and the sun shone mellowed through their leaves. Enormous curtains of purple cloth, with gold borders, hung at each side in mighty folds, to be drawn at night-time, when the eye should need repose from feasting upon color.

There were three brass bedsteads in a row, only four feet broad, with spring beds, hair mattresses a foot thick, and snowy sheets for coverlets, instead of counterpanes; so that, if you were hot, feverish, or sleepless in one bed, you might try another, or two.

Thick carpets and rugs, satin-wood wardrobes, prodigious wash-hand stands, with china backs four feet high. Towel-horses nearly as big as a donkey, with short towels, long towels, thick towels, thin towels, bathing-sheets, etc.; baths of every shape, and cans of every size; a large knee-hole table; paper and envelopes of every size. In short, a room to sleep in, study in, live in, and stick fast in, night and day.

But what is this? A Gothic arch, curtained with violet merino. He draws the curtain. It is an anteroom. One half of it is a bathroom, screened, and paved with encaustic tiles that run up the walls, so you may splash to your heart's content. The rest is a studio, and contains a choice little library of well-bound books in glass cases, a pianoforte, and a harmonium. Severne tried them; they were both in perfect tune. Two clocks, one in each room, were also in perfect time. Thereat he wondered. But the truth is, it was a house wherein precision reigned; a tuner and a clock-maker visited it by contract every month.

This, and two more guest-chambers, and the great dining-hall, were built under the Plantagenets, when all large land-owners entertained kings and princes with their retinues. As to that part of the house which was

built under the Tudors, there are hundreds of country-houses as important, only Mr. Severne had not been inside them, and was hardly aware to what perfection rational luxury is brought in the houses of our large landed gentry. He sat down in an antique chair of enormous size: the back went higher than his head, the seat ran out as far as his ankle, when seated; there was room in it for two, and it was stuffed — ye gods, how it was stuffed! The sides, the back, and the seat were all hair mattresses, a foot thick at least. Here nestled our sybarite, with the sun shining through leaves, and splashing his beautiful head with golden tints and transparent shadows, and felt in the temple of comfort, and incapable of leaving it alive.

He went down to luncheon. It was distinguishable from dinner in this, that they all got up after it, and Zoe said, "Come with me, children."

Fanny and Severne rose at the word. Vizard said he felt excluded from that invitation, having cut his wise-teeth — so he would light a cigar instead; and he did. Zoe took the other two into the kitchen-garden; four acres, surrounded with a high wall of orange-red brick, full of little holes where the nails had been. Zoe, being now at home, and queen, wore a new and pretty deportment. She was half maternal, and led her friend and lover about like two kids. She took them to this and that fruit-tree, set them to eat, and looked on superior: by way of climax, she led them to the south wall, crimson with ten thousand peaches and nectarines: she stepped over the border, took superb peaches and nectarines from the trees, and gave them, with her own hand, to Fanny and Severne. The head-gardener glared in dismay at the fair spoliator. Zoe observed him and laughed. "Poor Lucas," said she; "he would like them all to hang on the tree till they fell off with a wasp

inside. Eat as many as ever you can, young people — Lucas is amusing."

"I never had peaches enough off the tree before," said Fanny.

"No more have I," said Severne. "This must be the Elysian Fields, and I shall spoil my dinner."

"Who cares?" said Fanny, recklessly. "Dinner comes every day, and always at the only time when one has no appetite. But this eating of peaches — oh, what a beauty!"

"Children," said Zoe, gravely, "I advise you not to eat above a dozen. Do not enter on a fatal course, which in one brief year will reduce you to a hapless condition. There — I was let loose amongst them at sixteen, and ever since they pall. But I do like to see you eat them, and your eyes sparkle."

"That is too bad of you," said Fanny, driving her white teeth deep into a peach. "The idea! Now, Mr. Severne, do my eyes sparkle?"

"Like diamonds. But that proves nothing; it is their normal condition."

"There — make him a courtesy," said Zoe, "and come along."

She took them into the village. It was one of the old sort; little detached houses with little gardens in front, in all of which were a few humble flowers, and often a dark rose of surpassing beauty. Behind each cottage was a large garden, with various vegetables, and sometimes a few square yards of wheat. There was one little row of new brick houses standing together; their number five, their name New Town. This town of five houses was tiled; the detached houses were thatched, and the walls plastered and whitewashed like snow. Such whitewash seems never to be made in towns, or to lose its whiteness in a day. This broad surface of vivid white

was a background, against which the clinging roses, the clustering, creeping honeysuckles, and the deep young ivy, with its tender green and polished leaves, shone lovely: wood-smoke mounted thin and silvery from a cottage or two, that were cooking, and embroidered the air, not fouled it. The little windows had diamond panes, as in the middle ages, and every cottage door was open, suggesting hospitality and dearth of thieves. There was also that old essential, a village green; a broad strip of sacred turf, that was everybody's by custom, though in strict law Vizard's. Here a village cow and a donkey went about grazing the edges, for the turf in general was smooth as a lawn. By the side of the green was the village ale-house. After the green, other cottages; two of them

> "Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
> With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine."

One of these was called Mark's cottage, and the other Allen's. The rustic church stood in the middle of a hill nearly half a mile from the village. They strolled up to it. It had a tower built of flint, and clad on two sides with ivy three feet deep, and the body of the church was as snowy as the cottages, and on the south side a dozen swallows and martins had lodged their mortar nests under the eaves; they looked, against the white, like rugged gray stone bosses. Swallows and martins innumerable wheeled, swift as arrows, round the tower, chirping, and in and out of the church through an open window, and added their music and their motion to the beauty of the place.

Returning from the church to the village, Miss Dover lagged behind, and then Severne infused into his voice those tender tones which give amorous significance to the poorest prose.

"What an Arcadia!" said he.

"You would not like to be banished to it," said Zoe, demurely.

"That depends," said he, significantly.

Instead of meeting him half-way and demanding an explanation, Zoe turned coy and fell to wondering what Fanny was about.

"Oh, don't compel her to join us," said Severne. "She is meditating."

"On what? She is not much given that way."

"On her past sins: and preparing new ones."

"For shame! she is no worse than we are. Do you really admire Islip?"

"Indeed I do, if this is Islip."

"It is then, and this cottage with the cluster rose-tree all over the walls is Mark's cottage. We are rather proud of Mark's cottage," said she, timidly.

"It is a bower," said he, warmly.

This encouraged Zoe, and she said, "Is there not a wonderful charm in cottages? I often think I should like to live in Mark's. Have you ever had that feeling?"

"Never; but I have it now. I should like to live in it — with you."

Zoe blushed like a rose, but turned it off. "You would soon wish yourself back at Vizard Court," said she. "Fanny! Fanny!" and she stood still.

Fanny came up. "Well, what is the matter now?" said she, with pert, yet thoroughly apathetic, indifference.

"The matter is — extravagances. Here is a man of the world pretending he would like to end his days in Mark's cottage."

"Stop a bit. It was to be with somebody I loved. And wouldn't you, Miss Dover?"

"Oh dear, no. We should be sure to quarrel cooped

up in such a mite of a place. No! give me Vizard Court, and plenty of money, and the man of my heart."

"You have not got one, I'm afraid," said Zoe, "or you would not put him last."

"Why not! when he is of the last importance," said Fanny, flippantly, and turned the laugh her way.

They strolled through the village together, but in the grounds of Vizard Court, Fanny fairly gave them the slip. Severne saw his chance, and said, tenderly, —

"Did you hear what she said about a large house being best for lovers?"

"Yes, I heard her," said Zoe, defensively; "but very likely she did not mean it. That young lady's words are air. She will say one thing one day, and another the next."

"I don't know. There is one thing every young lady's mind is made up about, and that is whether it is to be love or money."

"She was for both, if I remember," said Zoe, still coldly.

"Because she is not in love."

"Well, I really believe she is not — for once."

"There, you see. She is in an unnatural condition."

"For her, very."

"So she is no judge. No; I should prefer Mark's cottage. The smaller the better; because then the woman I love could not ever be far from me."

He lowered his voice and drove the insidious words into her tender bosom. She began to tremble and heave, and defend herself feebly.

"What have I to do with that? You mustn't."

"How can I help it? You know the woman I love — I adore; and would not the smallest cottage in England be a palace if I was blessed with her sweet love and her divine company? Oh, Zoe, Zoe!"

Then she did defend herself after a fashion: "I won't listen to such — Edward!" Having uttered his name with divine tenderness, she put her hands to her blushing face and fled from him. At the head of the stairs she encountered Fanny, looking satirical; she reprimanded her.

"Fanny," said she, "you really must not do *that*" — (pause) —"out of our own grounds. Kiss me, darling. I am a happy girl." And she curled round Fanny and panted on her shoulder.

Miss Artful, known unto men as Fanny Dover, had already traced out in her own mind a line of conduct, which the above reprimand, minus the above kisses, taken at their joint algebraical value, did not disturb. The fact is, Fanny hated home; and liked Vizard Court above all places. But she was due at home, and hanging on to the Palace of Comfort by a thread. Any day her mother, out of natural affection and good breeding, might write for her; and unless one of her hosts interfered, she should have to go. But Harrington went for nothing in this, unfortunately. His hospitality was unobtrusive, but infinite. It came to him from the Plantagenets through a long line of gentlemen, who shone in vices; but inhospitality was unknown to the whole chain, and every human link in it. He might very likely forget to invite Fanny Dover, unless reminded; but, when she was there, she was welcome to stay forever if she chose. It was all one to him. He never bothered himself to amuse his guests, and so they never bored him. He never let them. He made them at home; put his people and his horses at their service; and preserved his even tenor. So then the question of Fanny's stay lay with Zoe: and Zoe would do one of two things; she would either say, with well-bred hypocrisy, she ought not to keep Fanny any longer from her mother —

and so get rid of her; or would interpose and give some reason or other. What that reason would be, Fanny had no precise idea. She was sure it would not be the true one; but there her insight into futurity and females ceased. Now Zoe was thoroughly fascinated by Severne, and Fanny saw it; and yet Zoe was too high-bred a girl to parade the village and the neighborhood with him alone — and so placard her attachment — before they were engaged, and the engagement sanctioned by the head of the house. This consideration enabled Miss Artful to make herself necessary to Zoe. Accordingly, she showed on the very first afternoon that she was prepared to play the convenient friend, and help Zoe to combine courtship with propriety.

This plan once conceived, she adhered to it with pertinacity and skill. She rode and walked with them, and in public put herself rather forward, and asserted the leader; but sooner or later, at a proper time and place, she lagged behind, or cantered ahead, and manipulated the wooing with tact and dexterity.

The consequence was that Zoe wrote of her own accord to Mrs. Dover, asking leave to detain Fanny, because her brother had invited a college friend, and it was rather awkward for her without Fanny, there being no other lady in the house at present.

She showed this to Fanny, who said earnestly, —

"As long as ever you like, dear. Mamma will not miss me a bit. Make your mind easy."

Vizard, knowing his sister, and entirely deceived in Severne, exercised no vigilance; for, to do Zoe justice, none was necessary, if Severne had been the man he seemed.

There was no mother in the house to tremble for her daughter, to be jealous, to watch, to question, to demand a clear explanation; in short, to guard her young as only the mothers of creation do.

The Elysian days rolled on; Zoe was in heaven, and Severne in a fool's paradise, enjoying everything, hoping everything, forgetting everything, and fearing nothing. He had come to this with all his cunning; he was intoxicated and blinded with passion.

Now it was that the idea of marrying Zoe first entered his head. But he was not mad enough for that. He repelled it with terror, rage, and despair. He passed an hour or two of agony in his own room, and came down, looking pale and exhausted. But, indeed, the little Dumas, though he does not pass for a moralist, says truly and well, "Les amours illégitimes portent toujours des fruits amers;" and Ned Severne's turn was come to suffer a few of the pangs he had inflicted gayly on more than one woman and her lover.

One morning at breakfast Vizard made two announcements. "Here's news," said he; "Dr. Gale writes to postpone her visit. She is ill, poor girl!"

"Oh, dear! what is the matter?" inquired Zoe, always kind-hearted.

"Gastritis, so she says."

"What is that?" inquired Fanny.

Mr. Severne, who was much pleased at this opportune illness, could not restrain his humor, and said it was a disorder produced by the fumes of gas.

Zoe, accustomed to believe this gentleman's lies, and not giving herself time to think, said there was a great escape in the passage the night she went there.

Then there was a laugh at her simplicity. She joined in it, but shook her finger at Master Severne.

Vizard then informed Zoe that Lord Uxmoor had been staying some time at Basildon Hall, about nine miles off; so he had asked him to come over for a week, and he had accepted. "He will be here to dinner," said Vizard. He then rang the bell, and sent for Harris, and ordered him

to prepare the blue chamber for Lord Uxmoor, and see the things aired himself. Harris having retired, catlike, Vizard explained — "My womankind shall not kill Uxmoor. He is a good fellow, and his mania — we have all got a mania, my young friends — is a respectable one. He wants to improve the condition of the poor — against their will."

"His friend that was so ill, — I hope he has not lost him," said Zoe.

"He hasn't lost him in this letter, Miss Gush," said Vizard. "But you can ask him when he comes."

"Of course I shall ask him," said Zoe.

Half an hour before dinner there was a grating of wheels on the gravel. Severne looked out of his bedroom window, and saw Uxmoor drive up. Dark-blue coach; silver harness, glittering in the sun; four chestnuts, glossy as velvet; two neat grooms, as quick as lightning. He was down in a moment, and his traps in the hall, and the grooms drove the trap round to the stables.

They were all in the drawing-room when Lord Uxmoor appeared; greeted Zoe with respectful warmth, Vizard with easy friendship, Severne and Miss Dover with well-bred civility. He took Zoe out, and sat at her right hand at dinner.

As the new guest, he had the first claim on her attention, and they had a topic ready — his sick friend. He told her all about him, and his happy recovery, with simple warmth. Zoe was interested and sympathetic; Fanny listened, and gave Severne short answers; Severne felt dethroned.

He was rather mortified, and a little uneasy, but too brave to show it. He bided his time. In the drawing-room Lord Uxmoor singled out Zoe, and courted her openly with respectful admiration. Severne drew Fanny

apart, and exerted himself to amuse her. Zoe began to cast uneasy glances. Severne made common cause with Fanny. "We have no chance against a lord, or a lady, you and I, Miss Dover."

"I haven't," said she; "but you need not complain She wishes she was here."

"So do I. Will you help me?"

"No, I shall not. You can make love to me. I am tired of never being made love to."

"Well," said this ingenuous youth, "you certainly do not get your deserts in this house. Even I am so blinded by my passion for Zoe, that I forget she does not monopolize all the beauty and grace and wit in the house."

"Go on," said Fanny. "I can bear a good deal of it — after such a fast."

"I have no doubt you can bear a good deal. You are one of those who inspire feelings, but don't share them. Give me a chance; let me sing you a song."

"A love-song?"

"Of course."

"Can you sing it as well as you can talk it?"

"With a little encouragement. If you would kindly stand at the end of the piano, and let me see your beautiful eyes fixed on me."

"With disdain?"

"No, no."

"With just suspicion?"

"No; with unmerited pity." And he began to open the piano.

"What! do you accompany yourself?"

"Yes, after a fashion; by that means I don't get run over."

Then this accomplished person fixed his eyes on Fanny Dover, and sang her an Italian love-song in the artificial, passionate style of that nation; and the English girl

received it point-blank with complacent composure. But Zoe started and thrilled at the first note, and crept up to the piano as if drawn by an irresistible cord. She gazed on the singer with amazement and admiration. His voice was a low tenor, round, and sweet as honey. It was a real voice, a musical instrument;

"More tunable than lark to shepherd's ear
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear."

And the Klosking had cured him of the fatal whine which stains the amateur, male or female, and had taught him climax, so that he articulated, and sang with perfect purity, and rang out his final notes instead of slurring them. In short, in plain passages he was a reflection, on a small scale, of that great singer. He knew this himself, and had kept clear of song; it was so full of reminiscence and stings. But now jealousy drove him to it.

It was Vizard's rule to leave the room whenever Zoe or Fanny opened the piano. So in the evening that instrument of torture was always mute.

But hearing a male voice, the squire, who doted on good music, as he abhorred bad, strolled in upon the chance; and he stared at the singer.

When the song ended, there was a little clamor of ladies' voices calling him to account for concealing his talent from them.

"I was afraid of Vizard," said he; "he hates bad music."

"None of your tricks," said the squire, "yours is not bad music; you speak your words articulately, and even eloquently. Your accompaniment is a little queer, especially in the bass; but you find out your mistakes, and slip out of them heaven knows how. Zoe, you are tame, but accurate; correct his accompaniments some day —

when I'm out of hearing. Practice drives me mad. Give us another."

Severne laughed good-humoredly. "Thus encouraged, who could resist?" said he. "It is so delightful to sing in a shower-bath of criticism."

He sang a sprightly French song, with prodigious spirit and dash.

They all applauded, and Vizard said, "I see how it is. We were not good enough. He would not come out for us. He wanted the public. Uxmoor, you are the public. It is to you we owe this pretty warbler. Have you any favorite song, Public? Say the word, and he shall sing it you."

Severne turned rather red at that, and was about to rise slowly, when Uxmoor, who was instinctively a gentleman, though not a courtier, said: "I don't presume to choose Mr. Severne's songs; but if we are not tiring him, I own I should like to hear an English song; for I am no musician, and the words are everything with me."

Severne assented dryly, and made him a shrewd return for his courtesy.

Zoe had a brave rose in her black hair. He gave her one rapid glance of significance, and sang a Scotch song, almost as finely as it could be sung in a room: —

"My love is like the red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
My love is like a melody
That's sweetly played in tune."

The dog did not slur the short notes and howl upon the long ones, as did a little fat Jew from London, with a sweet voice and no brains, whom I last heard howl it in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. No; he retained the pure rhythm of the composition, and, above all, sang it with the gentle earnestness and unquavering emotion of a Briton.

It struck Zoe's heart point-blank. She drew back, blushing like the rose in her hair and in the song, and hiding her happiness from all but the keen Fanny. Everybody but Zoe applauded the song. She spoke only with her cheeks and eyes.

Severne rose from the piano. He was asked to sing another, but declined laughingly. Indeed, soon afterwards he glided out of the room and was seen no more that night.

Consequently he became the topic of conversation; and the three who thought they knew him, vied in his praises.

In the morning an expedition was planned, and Lord Uxmoor proffered his "four-in-hand." It was accepted. All young ladies like to sit behind four spanking trotters; and few object to be driven by a viscount with a glorious beard and large estates.

Zoe sat by Uxmoor. Severne sat behind them with Fanny, a spectator of his open admiration. He could not defend himself so well as last night, and he felt humiliated by the position.

It was renewed day after day. Zoe often cast a glance back, and drew him into the conversation; yet, on the whole, Uxmoor thrust him aside by his advantages and his resolute wooing.

The same thing at dinner. It was only at night he could be number one. He tuned Zoe's guitar; and one night, when there was a party, he walked about the room with this, and putting his left leg out, serenaded one lady after another. Barfordshire was amazed and delighted at him, but Uxmoor courted Zoe as if he did not exist. He began to feel that he was the man to amuse women in Barfordshire, but Uxmoor the man to marry them. He began to sulk. Zoe's quick eye saw and pitied. She was puzzled what to do. Lord Uxmoor

gave her no excuse for throwing cold water on him, because his adoration was implied, not expressed; and he followed her up so closely, she could hardly get a word with Severne. When she did, there was consolation in every tone; and she took care to let drop that Lord Uxmoor was going in a day or two. So he was, but he altered his mind and asked leave to stay.

Severne looked gloomy at this, and he became dejected. He was miserable, and showed it, to see what Zoe would do. What she did was to get rather bored by Uxmoor, and glance from Fanny to Severne. I believe Zoe only meant, "Do, pray, say things to comfort him;" but Fanny read these gentle glances *à la* Dover. She took Severne aside one day, and said, —

"What is the matter with you?"

"Of course you can't divine," said he, sarcastically.

"Oh yes, I can; and it is your own fault."

"My fault! that is a good joke. Did I invite this man with all his advantages? That was Vizard's doing, who calls himself my friend."

"If it was not this one, it would be some other. Can you hope to keep Zoe Vizard from being courted? Why, she is the beauty of the county! and her brother not married. It is no use you making love by halves to her. She will go to some man who is in earnest."

"And am I not in earnest?"

"Not so much as he is. You have known her four months, and never once asked her to marry you."

"So I am to be punished for my self-denial."

"Self-denial! nonsense. Men have no self-denial. It is your cowardice."

"Don't be cruel. You know it is my poverty."

"Your poverty of spirit. You gave up money for her, and that is as good as if you had it still, and better. If you love Zoe, scrape up an income somehow, and say the

word. Why, Harrington is bewitched with you, and he is rolling in money. I wouldn't lose her by cowardice, if I were you. Uxmoor will offer marriage before he goes. He is staying on for that. Now, take my word for it, when one man offers marriage, and the other does not, there is always a good chance of the girl saying this one is in earnest, and the other is not. We don't expect self-denial in a man; we don't believe in it. We see you seizing upon everything else you care for; and, if you don't seize on us, it wounds our vanity, the strongest passion we have. Consider, Uxmoor has title, wealth, everything to bestow with the wedding-ring. If he offers all that, and you don't offer all you have, how much more generous he looks to her than you do!"

"In short, you think she will doubt my affection, if I don't ask her to share my poverty."

"If you don't, and a rich man asks her to share his all, I'm sure she will. And so should I. Words are only words."

"You torture me; I'd rather die than lose her."

"Then live and win her. I've told you the way."

"I will scrape an income together, and ask her."

"Upon your honor?"

"Upon my soul."

"Then, in my opinion, you will have her in spite of Lord Uxmoor."

Hot from this, Edward Severne sat down and wrote a moving letter to a certain cousin of his in Huntingdonshire.

My dear Cousin, — I have often heard you say you were under obligations to my father, and had a regard for me. Indeed, you have shown the latter by letting the interest on my mortgage run out many years and not foreclosing. Having no other friend, I now write to you, and throw myself on your pity. I have formed a deep attachment to a young lady

of infinite beauty and virtue. She is above me in everything, especially in fortune. Yet she deigns to love me. I can't ask her hand as a pauper; and by my own folly, now deeply repented, I am little more. Now, all depends on you, my happiness, my respectability. Sooner or later I shall be able to repay you all. For God's sake, come to the assistance of your affectionate cousin,

EDWARD SEVERNE.

The brother, a man of immense estates, is an old friend, and warmly attached to me. If I could only, through your temporary assistance or connivance, present my estate as clear, all would be well, and I could repay you afterwards.

To this letter he received an immediate reply.

DEAR EDWARD, — I thought you had forgotten my very existence. Yes, I owe much to your father, and have always said so, and acted accordingly. Whilst you have been wandering abroad, deserting us all, I have improved your estate. I have bought all the other mortgages, and of late the rent has paid the interest, within a few pounds. I now make you an offer. Give me a long lease of the two farms at three hundred pounds a year — they will soon be vacant — and two thousand pounds out of hand, and I will cancel all the mortgages, and give you a receipt for them as paid in full. This will be like paying you several thousand pounds for a beneficial lease. The two thousand pounds I must insist on, in justice to my own family. Your affectionate cousin,

GEORGE SEVERNE.

This munificent offer surprised and delighted Severne; and, indeed, no other man but cousin George, who had a heart of gold, and was grateful to Ned's father, and also loved the scamp himself, as everybody did, would have made such an offer.

Our adventurer wrote and closed with it, and gushed gratitude. Then he asked himself how to get the money. Had he been married to Zoe, or not thinking of her, he

would have gone at once to Vizard, for the security was ample. But in his present delicate situation this would not do. No: he must be able to come and say, "My estate is small, but it is clear. Here is a receipt for six thousand pounds worth of mortgages I have paid off. I am poor in land, but rich in experience, regrets, and love. Be my friend, and trust me with Zoe."

He turned and twisted it in his mind, and resolved on a bold course. He would go to Homburg, and get that sum by hook or by crook out of Ina Klosking's winnings. He took Fanny into his confidence; only he substituted London for Homburg.

"And oh, Miss Dover," said he, "do not let me suffer by going away and leaving a rival behind."

"Suffer by it!" said she. "No. I mean to reward you for taking my advice. Don't you say a word to *her*. It will come better from me. I'll let her know what you are gone for: and she is just the girl to be upon honor, and ever so much cooler to Lord Uxmoor, because you are unhappy, but have gone away trusting her."

And his artful ally kept her word. She went into Zoe's room before dinner to have it out with her.

In the evening Severne told Vizard he must go up to London for a day or two.

"All right," said Vizard. "Tell some of them to order the dog-cart for your train."

But Zoe took occasion to ask him for how long, and murmured, "Remember how we shall miss you," with such a look that he was in Elysium that evening.

But at night he packed his bag for Homburg, and that chilled him. He lay slumbering all night, but not sleeping, and waking with starts and a sense of horror.

At breakfast, after reading his letters, Vizard asked him what train he would go by.

He said, the one o'clock.

"All right," said Vizard. Then he rang the bell, countermanded the dog-cart, and ordered the barouche.

"A barouche for me!" said Severne. "Why, I am not going to take the ladies to the station."

"No; it is to bring one here. She comes down from London five minutes before you take the up train."

There was a general exclamation. Who was it? Aunt Maitland?

"No," said Vizard, tossing a note to Zoe — "it is Doctress Gale."

Severne's countenance fell.

CHAPTER XIX.

Edward Severne, master of arts, dreaded Rhoda Gale, M.D. He had deluded, in various degrees, several ladies that were no fools; but here was one who staggered and puzzled him. Bright and keen as steel, quick and spirited, yet controlled by judgment, and always mistress of herself, she seemed to him a new species. The worst of it was, he felt himself in the power of this new woman, and indeed he saw no limit to the mischief she might possibly do him if she and Zoe compared notes. He had thought the matter over, and realized this more than he did when in London. Hence the good youth's delight at her illness, noticed in a former chapter.

He was very thoughtful all breakfast-time, and, as soon as it was over, drew Vizard apart, and said he would postpone his visit to London until he had communicated with his man of business. He would go to the station and telegraph him; and by that means would do the civil and meet Miss Gale. Vizard stared at him.

"You meet my virago? Why, I thought you disapproved her entirely."

"No, no; only the idea of a female doctor, not the lady herself. Besides, it is a rule with me, my dear fellow, never to let myself disapprove my friends' friends."

"That is a bright idea, and you are a good fellow," said Vizard. "Go and meet the pest by all means, and bring her here to luncheon. After luncheon we will drive her up to the farm and ensconce her."

Edward Severne had this advantage over most impostors, that he was masculine or feminine as occasion re-

quired. For instance, he could be hysterical, or bold, to serve the turn. Another example — he watched faces like a woman, and yet he could look you in the face like a man, especially when he was lying. In the present conjuncture a crafty woman would have bristled with all the arts of self-defence, but stayed at home and kept close to Zoe: not so our master of arts; he went manfully to meet Rhoda Gale, and so secure a *tête-à-tête*, and learn, if possible, what she meant to do, and whether she could be cannily propitiated. He reached the station before her, and took that opportunity to wire a very intelligent person who, he knew, conducted delicate inquiries, and had been very successful in a divorce case, public two years before. Even as he despatched this message there was a whistling and a ringing, and the sound of a coming train, and Ned Severne ran to meet Rhoda Gale with a heart palpitating a little, and a face beaming greatly to order. He looked for her in the first-class carriages; but she was in the second, and saw him. He did not see her till she stepped out on the platform. Then he made towards her. He took off his hat, and said with respectful zeal, "If you will tell me what luggage you have, the groom shall get it out."

Miss Gale's eyes wandered over him loftily. "I have only a box and a bag, sir, both marked R. G."

"Joe," said he — for he had already made friends with all the servants, and won their hearts — "box and bag marked R. G. Miss Gale, you had better take your seat in the carriage."

Miss Gale gave a little supercilious nod, and he showed her obsequiously into the carriage. She laid her head back and contemplated vacancy ahead in a manner anything but encouraging to this new admirer fate had sent her. He turned away a little discomfited, and when the luggage was brought up he had the bag placed inside,

and the box in a sort of boot, and then jumped in and seated himself inside. "Home," said he to the coachman, and off they went. When he came in she started with well-feigned surprise, and stared at him.

"Oh," said she, "I have met you before. Why, it is Mr. Severne. Excuse me taking you for one of the servants. Some people have short memories, you know."

This deliberate affront was duly felt, but parried with a master-hand.

"Why, I *am* one of the servants," said he; "only I am not Vizard's. I'm yours."

"In-deed!"

"If you will let me."

"I am too poor to have fine servants."

"Say too haughty: you are not too poor, for I shall not cost you anything but a gracious word now and then."

"Unfortunately I don't deal in gracious words, only true ones."

"I see that."

"Then suppose you imitate me, and tell me why you came to meet me?"

This question came from her with sudden celerity, like lightning out of a cloud, and she bent her eyes on him with that prodigious keenness she could throw into those steel-gray orbs, when her mind put on its full power of observation.

Severne colored a little and hesitated.

"Come now," said this keen witch, "don't wait to make up a reason. Tell the truth for once — quick! — quick! — why did *you* come to meet *me?*"

"I didn't come to be bullied," replied supple Severne, affecting sullenness.

"You didn't!" cried the other, acting vast surprise. "Then what *did* you come for?"

"I don't know; and I wish I hadn't come."

"That I believe." Rhoda shot this in like an arrow.

"But," continued Severne, "if I hadn't, nobody would; for it is Vizard's justicing day, and the ladies are too taken up with a lord to come and meet such vulgar trifles as genius, and learning, and sci—"

"Come, come!" said Rhoda, contemptuously; "you care as little about science, and learning, and genius, as I possess them. You won't tell me? Well, I shall find you out." Then, after a pause, "Who is this lord?"

"Lord Uxmoor."

"What kind of a lord is he?"

"A very bushy lord."

"Bushy — oh, bearded like the pard. Now, tell me," said she, "is he cutting you out with Miss Vizard?"

"You shall judge for yourself. Please spare me on that one topic — if you ever spared anybody in your life."

"Oh, dear me!" said Rhoda, coolly. "I'm not so very cruel; I'm only a little vindictive, and cat-like. If people offend me, I like to play with them a bit, and amuse myself, and then kill them — kill them — kill them; that is all."

This pretty little revelation of character was accompanied with a cruel smile that showed a long row of dazzling white teeth. They seemed capable of killing anything from a liar up to a hickory-nut.

Severne looked at her and gave a shudder. "Then Heaven forbid you should ever be my enemy!" said he, sadly; "for I am unhappy enough already."

Having delivered this disarming speech, he collapsed, and seemed to be overpowered with despondency. Miss Gale showed no signs of melting. She leaned back and eyed him with steady and composed curiosity, as a zoölogist studying a new specimen and all its little movements.

They drove up to the hall-door, and Miss Gale was conducted to the drawing-room, where she found Lord Uxmoor and the two young ladies. Zoe shook hands with her. Fanny put a limp paw into hers, which made itself equally limp directly, so Fanny's dropped out. Lord Uxmoor was presented to her, at his own request. Soon after this, luncheon was announced. Vizard joined them, welcomed Rhoda genially, and told the party he had ordered the break, and Uxmoor would drive them to the farm round by Hillstoke and the Common; "And so," said he, "by showing Miss Gale our most picturesque spot at once, we may perhaps blind her to the horrors of her situation — for a time."

The break was driven round in due course, with Uxmoor's team harnessed to it. It was followed by a dog-cart crammed with grooms, Uxmoorian and Vizardian. The break was padded and cushioned, and held eight or nine people very comfortably. It was, indeed, a sort of picnic van, used only in very fine weather. It rolled on beautiful springs. Its present contents were Miss Gale and her luggage and two hampers full of good things for her; Vizard, Severne, and Miss Dover. Zoe sat on the box beside Lord Uxmoor. They drove through the village, and Mr. Severne was so obliging as to point out its beauties to Miss Gale. She took little notice of his comments, except by a stiff nod every now and then, but eyed each house and premises with great keenness.

At last she stopped his fluency by inquiring whether he had been into them all; and when he said he had not, she took advantage of that admission to inform him that in two days' time she should be able to tell him a great deal more than he was likely to tell her, upon his method of inspecting villages.

"That is right," said Vizard, "snub him. He gets snubbed too little here. How dare he pepper science

with his small-talk? But it is our fault,—we admire his volubility."

"Oh," said Fanny, with a glance of defiance at Miss Gale, "if we are to talk nothing but science, it *will* be a weary world."

After the village there was a long gradual ascent of about a mile, and then they entered a new country. It was a series of woods and clearings, some grass, some arable. Huge oaks flung their arms over a road lined on either side by short turf, close cropped by the gypsies' cattle. Some band or other of them was always encamped by the roadside, and never two bands at once. And between these giant trees, not one of which was ever felled, you saw here and there a glade, green as an emerald; or a yellow stubble, glowing in the sun. After about a mile of this, still mounting, but gradually, they emerged upon a spacious table-land, a long broad open grass plateau, studded with cottages. In this lake of grass Uxmoor drew up at a word from Zoe to show Miss Gale the scene. The cottages were white as snow, and thatched as at Islip; but instead of vegetable gardens they all had orchards. The trees were apple and cherry; of the latter not less than a thousand in that small hamlet. It was literally a lawn, a quarter of a mile long, and about two hundred yards broad, bordered with white cottages and orchards. The cherries, red and black, gleamed like countless eyes among the cool leaves. There was a little church on the lawn that looked like a pigeon-house. A cow or two grazed peacefully. Pigs, big and little, crossed the lawn grunting and squeaking satisfaction, and dived into the adjacent woods after acorns, and here and there a truffle the villagers knew not the value of. There was a pond or two in the lawn; one had a wooden plank fixed on uprights, that went in some way. A woman was out on the board bare-armed,

dipping her bucket in for water. In another pond an old knowing horse stood gravely cooling his heels up to the fetlocks. These, with shirts, male and female, drying on a line, and white-headed children rolling in the dust, and a donkey braying his heart out for reasons known only to himself if known at all, were the principal details of the sylvan hamlet; but on a general survey there were grand beauties. The village and its turf lay in the semicircular sweep of an unbroken forest; but at the sides of the leafy basin glades had been cut for drawing timber, stacking bark, etc.; and what Milton calls so happily "the chequered shade," was seen in all its beauty; for the hot sun struggled in at every aperture, and splashed the leaves and the path with fiery flashes and streaks, and topaz brooches, all intensified in fire and beauty by the cool adjacent shadows.

Looking back, the view was quite open in most places. The wooded lanes and strips they had passed were little more in so vast a panorama than the black stripes on a backgammon-board. The site was so high that the eye swept over all, and rested on a broad valley beyond, with a patchwork pattern of variegated fields, and the curling steam of engines flying across all England; then swept by a vast incline up to an horizon of faint green hills, the famous pastures of the United Kingdom. So that it was a deep basin of foliage in front; but you had only to turn your body, and there was a forty-mile view, with all the sweet varieties of color that gem our fields and meadows, as they bask in the afternoon sun of that golden time when summer melts into autumn, and mellows without a chill.

"Oh!" cried Miss Gale, "don't anybody speak, please. It is too beautiful."

They respected an enthusiasm so rare in this young lady, and let her contemplate the scene at her ease.

"I reckon," said she, dogmatically, and nodding that wise little head, "that this is old England; the England my ancestors left in search of liberty — and that's a plant that ranks before cherry-trees, I rather think. No, I couldn't have gone; I'd have stayed and killed a hundred tyrants. But I wouldn't have chopped their heads off; (to Vizard, very confidentially) I'd have poisoned 'em."

"Don't, Miss Gale," said Fanny; "you make my blood run cold."

As it was indifferent to Miss Gale whether she made Miss Dover's blood run cold or not, she paid no attention, but proceeded with her reflections. "The only thing that spoils it is the smoke of those engines, reminding one that in two hours you or I, or that pastoral old hermit there in a smock-frock and a pipe, and oh, what bad tobacco! can be wrenched out of this paradise, and shrieked and rattled off and flung into that wilderness of brick called London, where the hearts are as hard as the pavement — except those that have strayed there from Barfordshire."

The witch changed face, and tone, and everything, like lightning, and threw this last in with a sudden grace and sweetness that contrasted strangely with her usual sharpness.

Zoe heard, and turned round to look down on her with a smile as sweet as honey. "I hardly think that is a drawback," said she, amicably. "Does not being able to leave a place make it sweeter? for then we are free in it, you know. But I must own there *is* a drawback — the boys' faces, Miss Gale, they *are* so pasty."

"Indeed!" says Rhoda, pricking up her ears.

"Nurse no false hopes of an epidemic; this is not an infirmary in a wood, Miss Gale," said Vizard. "My sister is a great colorist, and pitches her expectations

too high. I dare say their faces are not more pasty than usual; but this is a show place, and looks like a garden; so Zoe wants the boys to be poppies and pansies, and the girls roses and lilies. Which — they — are — not."

"All I know is," said Zoe, resolutely, "that in Islip the children's faces are rosy; but here they are pasty — dreadfully pasty."

"Well, you have got a box of colors; we will come up some day, and tint all the putty-faced boys." It was to Miss Dover the company owed this suggestion.

"No," said Rhoda. "Their faces are my business. I'll soon fix them; she didn't say putty-faced, she said pasty."

"Grateful to you for the distinction, Miss Gale," said Zoe.

Miss Gale proceeded to insist that boys are not pasty-faced without a cause, and it is to be sought lower down. "Ah!" cried she, suddenly, "is that a cherry that I see before me? No, a million. They steal them and eat them by the thousand, and that's why. Tell the truth now, everybody — they eat the stones?"

Miss Vizard said she did not know, but thought them capable.

"Children know nothing," said Vizard. "Please address all future scientific inquiries to an 'old inhabitant.' Miss Gale, the country abounds in curiosities; but, amongst those curiosities, even Science with her searching eye has never yet discovered an unswallowed cherry-stone in Hillstoke village."

"What! not on the trees?"

"She is too much for me. Drive on, coachman, and drown her replies in the clatter of hoofs. Round by the Stag, Zoe. I am uneasy till I have locked fair Science up. I own it is a mean way of getting rid of a troublesome disputant."

"Now I think it is quite fair," said Fanny. "She shuts you up, and so you lock her up."

"'Tis well," said Vizard, dolefully. "Now I am No. 3 —I who used to retort and keep girls in their places — with difficulty. Here is Ned Severne, too, reduced to silence. Why, where's your tongue? Miss Gale, you would hardly believe it, this is our chatterbox. We have been days and days, and could not get in a word edgeways for him. But now all he can do is to gaze on you with canine devotion, and devour the honey — I beg pardon, the lime-juice — of your lips. I warn you of one thing, though; there is such a thing as a threatening silence. He is evidently booking every word you utter; and he will deliver it all, for his own, behind your back some fine day."

With this sort of banter and small-talk not worth deluging the reader dead with, they passed away the time till they reached the farm.

"You stay here," said Vizard — "all but Zoe. Tom and George, get the things out." The grooms had already jumped out of the dog-cart, and two were at the horses' heads. The step-ladder was placed for Zoe, and Vizard asked her to go in and see the rooms were all right, while he took Miss Gale to the stables. He did so, and showed her a spirited Galloway, and a steady old horse, and told her she could ride one and drive the other all over the country.

She thanked him, but said her attention would be occupied by the two villages first, and she should make him a report in forty-eight hours.

"As you please," said he; "you are terribly in earnest."

"What should I be worth, if I was not?"

"Well, come and see your shell; and you must tell me if we have forgotten anything essential to your comfort."

She followed him, and he led her to a wing of the farmhouse, comparatively new, and quite superior to the rest. Here were two good sunny rooms, with windows looking south and west, and they were both papered with a white watered pattern, and a pretty French border of flowers at the upper part, to look gay and cheerful.

Zoe was in the bedroom arranging things, with a pretty air of hospitality. It was cheerily fitted up, and a fire of beech-logs blazing.

"How good you are!" said Rhoda, looking wistfully at her. But Zoe checked all comments by asking her to look at the sitting-room, and see if it would do. Rhoda would rather have stayed with Zoe; but she complied, and found another bright cheerful room, and Vizard standing in the middle of it. There was another beech-fire blazing, though it was hot weather. Here was a round table, with a large pot full of flowers, geraniums and musk-flowers outside, with the sun gilding their green leaves most amiably, and everything unpretending, but bright and comfortable; well-padded sofa, luxurious arm-chair, standing-up reading-desk, and a very large knee-hole table; a fine mirror from the ceiling to the dado; a book-case with choice books, and on a pembroke table near the wall were several periodicals. Rhoda, after a cursory survey of the room, flew to the books. "Oh," said she, "what good books! all standard works; and several on medicine; and, I declare, the last numbers of the 'Lancet' and the 'Medical Gazette,' and the very best French and German periodicals! Oh, what have I done? and what can I ever do?"

"What! Are *you* going to gush like the rest — and about nothing?" said Vizard: "then I'm off; come along, Zoe," and he hurried his sister away.

She came at the word; but as soon as they were out of the house, asked him what was the matter.

"I thought she was going to gush. But I dare say it was a false alarm."

"And why shouldn't she gush, when you have been so kind?"

"Pooh! nonsense! I have not been kind to her, and don't mean to be kind to her or to any woman; besides, she must not be allowed to gush: she is the parish virago — imported from vast distances as such — and for her to play the woman would be an abominable breach of faith. We have got our gusher, likewise our flirt; and it was understood from the first that this was to be a new *dramatis persona* — was not to be a repetition of you or *la* Dover, but — ahem! — the third grace, a virago: solidified vinegar."

Rhoda Gale felt very happy. She was young, healthy, ambitious, and sanguine. She divined that somehow her turning-point had come; and when she contrasted her condition a month ago, and the hardness of the world, with the comfort and kindness that now surrounded her, and the magnanimity which fled, not to be thanked for them, she felt for once in a way humble as well as grateful, and said to herself — "It is not to myself nor any merit of mine I owe such a change as all this is."

She went into the kitchen, ordered tea, bread and butter, and one egg, for dinner, at seven o'clock, and walked instantly back to Hillstoke to inspect the village, according to her ideas of inspection.

Next morning down came the bailiff's head man in his light cart, and a note was delivered to Vizard at the breakfast-table. He read it to himself, then proclaimed silence, and read it aloud.

DEAR SIR, — As we crossed your hall to luncheon there was the door of a small room half open, and I saw a large mahogany case standing on a marble table with one leg, but three claws gilt. I saw "Micro" printed on the case. So I hope it

is a microscope, and a fine one. To enable you to find it if you don't know, the room had crimson curtains, and is papered in green flock. That is the worst of all the poisonous papers; because the texture is loose, and the poisonous stuff easily detached, and always flying about the room. I hope you do not sit in it, nor Miss Vizard, because sitting in that room is courting death. Please lend me the microscope, if it is one, and I'll soon show you why the boys are putty-faced. I have inspected them, and find Miss Dover's epithet more exact than Miss Vizard's, which is singular. I will take great care of it.

Yours respectfully,

RHODA GALE.

Vizard ordered a servant to deliver the microscope to Miss Gale's messenger with his compliments. Fanny wondered what she wanted with it. "Not to inspect our little characters, it is to be hoped," said Vizard. "Why not pay her a visit, you ladies? then she will tell you, perhaps." The ladies instantly wore that bland look of inert but rocky resistance I have already noted as a characteristic of "our girls." Vizard saw and said, "Try and persuade them, Uxmoor."

"I can only offer Miss Vizard my escort," said Lord Uxmoor.

"And I offer both ladies mine," said Ned Severne, rather loud, and with a little sneer, to mark his superior breeding. The gentleman was so extremely polite in general, that there was no mistaking his hostile intentions now. The inevitable war had begun, and the first shot was fired. Of course the wonder was, it had not come long before; and perhaps I ought to have drawn more attention to the delicacy and tact of Zoe Vizard, which had averted it for a time. To be sure, she had been aided by the size of the house and its habits. The ladies had their own sitting-rooms; Fanny kept close to Zoe by special orders; and nobody could get a chance

tête-à-tête with Zoe unless she chose. By this means, by her native dignity and watchful tact, by her frank courtesy to Uxmoor, and by the many little quiet ways she took to show Severne her sentiments remained unchanged, she had managed to keep the peace, and avert that open competition for her favor, which would have tickled the vanity of a Fanny Dover, but shocked the refined modesty of a Zoe Vizard.

But Nature will have her way, soon or late; and it is the nature of males to fight for the female.

At Severne's shot Uxmoor drew up a little haughtily, but did not feel sure anything was intended. He was little accustomed to rubs. Zoe, on the other hand, turned a little pale — just a little; for she was sorry, but not surprised; so she proved equal to the occasion; she smiled and made light of it. "Of course, we are *all* going," said she.

"Except one," said Vizard, dryly.

"That is too bad," said Fanny. "Here he drives us all to visit his blue-stocking, but he takes good care not to go himself."

"Perhaps he prefers to visit her alone," suggested Severne. Zoe looked alarmed.

"That is *so*," said Vizard. "Observe, I am learning her very phrases. When you come back, tell me every word she says; pray let nothing be lost that falls from my virago."

The party started after luncheon; and Severne, true to his new policy, whipped to Zoe's side before Uxmoor, and engaged her at once in conversation.

Uxmoor bit his lip, and fell to Fanny. Fanny saw at once what was going on, and made herself very agreeable to Uxmoor. He was polite, and a little gratified, but cast uneasy glances at the other pair.

Meantime Severne was improving his opportunity.

"Sorry to disturb Lord Uxmoor's monopoly," said he, sarcastically; "but I could not bear it any longer."

"I do not object to the change," said Zoe, smiling maternally on him; "but you will be good enough to imitate me in one thing — you will always be polite to Lord Uxmoor."

"He makes it rather hard."

"It is only for a time; and we must all learn to be capable of self-denial. I assure you I have exercised quite as much as I ask of you. Edward, he is a gentleman of great worth, universally respected, and my brother has a particular wish to be friends with him. So pray be patient; be considerate. Have a little faith in one who" —

She did not end the sentence.

"Well, I will," said he. "But please think of me a little. I am beginning to feel quite thrust aside, and degraded in my own eyes for putting up with it."

"For shame to talk so!" said Zoe; but the tears came into her eyes.

The master of arts saw, and said no more. He had the art of not overdoing: he left the arrow to rankle. He walked by her side in silence for ever so long. Then, suddenly, as if by a mighty effort of unselfish love, went off into delightful discourse. He cooed and wooed, and flattered, and fascinated; and by the time they reached the farm, had driven Uxmoor out of her head.

Miss Gale was out. The farmer's wife said she had gone into the town — meaning Hillstoke — which was, strictly speaking, a hamlet, or tributary village. Hillstoke Church was only twelve years old, and the tithes of the place went to the parson of Islip.

When Zoe turned to go, Uxmoor seized the opportunity, and drew up beside her, like a soldier falling into the ranks. Zoe felt hot; but as Severne took no open

notice, she could not help smiling at the behavior of the fellows; and Uxmoor got his chance.

Severne turned to Fanny, with a wicked sneer. "Very well, my lord," said he: "but I have put a spoke in your wheel."

"As if I did not see, you clever creature!" said Fanny, admiringly.

"Ah, Miss Dover, I need to be as clever as you. See what I have against me: a rich lord, with the bushiest beard."

"Never you mind," said Fanny. "Good wine needs no bush, ha! ha! You are lovely and have a wheedling tongue, and you were there first. Be good, now — and you can flirt with me to fill up the time. I hate not being flirted at. It is stagnation."

"Yes, but it is not so easy to flirt with you just a little. You are so charming." Thereupon he proceeded to flatter her, and wonder how he had escaped a passionate attachment to so brilliant a creature. "What saved me," said he oracularly, "is, that I never could love two at once; and Zoe seized my love at sight. She left me nothing to lay at your feet but my admiration, the tenderest friendship man can feel for woman, and my life-long gratitude for fighting my battle. Oh, Miss Dover, I must be quite serious a moment. What other lady but you would be so generous as to befriend a poor man with another lady, when there's wealth and title on the other side?"

Fanny blushed and softened, but turned it off. "There — no heroics, please," said she. "You are a dear little fellow; and don't go and be jealous, for he shan't have her. He would never ask me to his house, you know. Now I think you would, perhaps — who knows? Tell me, fascinating monster, are you going to be ungrateful?"

"Not to you. My home would always be yours; and

you know it." And he caught her hand, and kissed it in an ungovernable transport, the strings of which he pulled himself. He took care to be quick about it though, and not let Zoe or Uxmoor see, who were walking on before, and behaving sedately.

In Hillstoke lived, on a pension from Vizard, old Mrs. Greenaway, rheumatic about the lower joints, so she went on crutches; but she went fast, being vigorous, and so did her tongue. At Hillstoke she was Dame Greenaway, being a relic of that generation which applied the word dame to every wife, high and low; but at Islip she was "Sally," because she had started under that title, fifty-five years ago, as housemaid at Vizard Court, and, by the tenacity of oral tradition, retained it ever since, in spite of two husbands she had wedded and buried with equal composure.

Her feet were still springy, her arms strong as iron, and her crutches active. At sight of our party she came out with amazing wooden strides, agog for gossip, and met them at the gate. She managed to indicate a courtesy, and said, "Good day, miss: your sarvant, all the company. Lord, how nice you be dressed, all on ye! to — be — sure. Well, miss, have ye heerd the news?"

"No, Sally. What is it?"

"What! haant ye heerd about the young 'oman at the farm?"

"Oh, yes; we came to see her."

"No, did ye now? Well, she was here not half an hour agone. By the same toaken, I did put her a question, and she answered me then and there."

"And may I ask what the question was?"

"And welcome, miss. I said, says I, 'Young 'oman, where be you come from?' so says she, 'Old 'oman, I be come from forin parts.' 'I thought as much,' says I. 'And what be'e come *for?*' 'To sojourn here,' says she,

which she meant to bide a time. 'And what de'e count to do whilst here you be?' says I. Says she, 'As much good as ever I can do, and as little harm.' 'That is no answer,' says I. She said it would do for the present; 'and good day to you, ma'am,' says she. 'Your sarvant, miss,' says I; and she was off like a flash. But I called my grandson Bill, and I told him he must follow her, go where she would, and let us know what she was up to down in Islip. Then I went round the neighbors, and one told me one tale, and another another. But it all comes to one — we have gotten a BUSYBODY; that's the name I gives her. She don't give in to that, ye know; she is a Latiner, and speaks accordin. She gave Master Giles her own description. Says she, 'I'm suspector-general of this here districk.' So then Giles he was skeared a bit — he have got an acre of land of his own, you know — and he up and asked her did she come under the taxes, or was she a fresh imposition; 'for we are burdened enough a'ready, no offence to you, miss,' says Josh Giles. 'Don't you be skeared, old man,' says she, 'I shan't cost *you* none; your betters pays for I.' So says Giles, 'Oh, if you falls on Squire I don't vally that; Squire's back is broad enough to bear the load, but I'm a poor man.' That's how a' goes on, ye know. Poverty is always in his mouth; but the old chap have got a hatful of money hid away in the thatch or some're, only he haant a got the heart to spend it."

"Tell us more about the young lady," asked Uxmoor.

"What young lady? Oh, *her!* She is not a young lady — leastways she is not dressed like one, but like a plain, decent body. She was all of a piece — blue serge! Bless your heart! the peddlers bring it round here at elevenpence halfpenny the yard, and a good breadth too; and plain boots, not heeled like yourn, miss, nor yourn, ma'am; and a felt hat like a boy. You'd say the parish

had dressed her for ten shillings, and got a pot of beer out on't."

"Well, never mind that," said Zoe; "I must tell you she is a very worthy young lady, and my brother has a respect for her. Dress? Why, Sally, you know it is not the wisest that spend most on dress. You might tell us what she *does*."

Dame Greenaway snatched the word out of her mouth. "Well, then, miss, what she have done, she have suspected everything. She have suspected the ponds; she have suspected the houses; she have suspected the folk; she must know what they eat and drink and wear next their very skin, and what they do lie down on. She have been at the very boys and forbade 'em to swallow the cherry-stones, poor things; but old Mrs. Nash — which her boys lives on cherries at this time o' year, and to be sure they are a godsend to keep the children hereabout from starving — well, Dame Nash told her the Almighty knew best; He had put 'em together on the tree, so why not in the boys' insides? and that was common sense, to my mind. But, la! she wouldn't hear it. She said, 'Then you'd eat the peach-stones by that rule, and the fish-bones and all.' Says she, quite resolute-like, 'I forbid 'em to swallow the stones;' and says she, 'ye mawnt gainsay me, none on ye, for I be the new doctor.' So then it all come out. She isn't suspector-general; she is a wench turned doctor, which it is against reason. Shan't doctor *me*, for one; but that there old Giles, he says he is agreeable, if so be she wool doctor him cheap — cussed old fool! — as if any doctoring was cheap that kills a body and doan't cure 'em. Dear heart, I forgot to tell ye about the ponds. Well, you know there be no wells here. We makes our tea out of the ponds, and capital good tea to drink, far before well-water, for I mind that one day about twenty years agone, some interfering body

did cart a barrel up from Islip, and 'twas main tasteless; and if we wants water withouten tea, why we can get plenty on't, and none too much malt and hops, at 'The Black Horse.' So this here young 'oman she suspects the poor ponds, and casts a hevil eye on them, and she borrows two mugs of Giles, and carries the water home to suspect it closer. That is all she have done at present, but you see she haant been here so very long. You mark my words, miss; that young 'oman will turn Hillstoke village topsy-turvy or ever she goes back to London town."

"Nonsense, Sally," said Zoe; "how can anybody do that whilst my brother and I are alive?" She then slipped half-a-crown into Sally's hand, and led the way to Islip.

On the road her conversation with Uxmoor took a turn suggestive of this interview. I forget which began it; but they differed a little in opinion, Uxmoor admiring Miss Gale's zeal and activity, and Zoe fearing that she would prove a rash reformer, perhaps a reckless innovator.

"And really," said she, "why disturb things? for, go where I will, I see no such paradise as these two villages."

"They are indeed lovely," said Uxmoor; "but my own village is very pretty. Yet on nearer inspection I have found so many defects, especially in the internal arrangements of the cottages, that I am always glad to hear of a new eye having come to bear on any village."

"I know you are very good," said Zoe, "and wish all the poor people about you to be as healthy and as happy as possible."

"I really do," said Uxmoor, warmly. "I often think of the strange inequality in the lot of men. Living in the country, I see around me hundreds of men who are by nature as worthy as I am, or thereabouts. Yet they

must toil and labor, and indeed fight for bare food and clothing all their lives, and worse off at the close of their long labor. That is what grieves me to the heart. All this time I revel in plenty and luxuries — not forgetting the luxury of luxuries, the delight of giving to those who need and deserve. What have I done for all this? I have been born of the right parents. My merit, then, is the accident of an accident. But having done nothing meritorious before I was born, surely I ought to begin afterwards. I think a man born to wealth ought to doubt his moral title to it, and ought to set to work to prove it — ought to set himself to repair the injustice of fortune by which he profits. Yes, such a man should be a sort of human sunshine and diffuse blessings all round him. The poor man, that encounters him, ought to bless the accident. But there, I am not eloquent. You know how much more I mean than I can say."

"Indeed I do," said Zoe, "and I honor you."

"Ah, Miss Vizard," said Uxmoor, "that is more than I can ever deserve."

"You are praising me at your own expense," said Zoe. "Well, then," said she, sweetly, "please accept my sympathy. It is so rare to find a gentleman of your age thinking so little of himself and so much of poor people. Yet that is a divine command. But somehow we forget our religion, out of church — most of us. I am sure I do, for one."

This conversation brought them to the village, and there they met Vizard, and Zoe repeated old Sally's discourse to him word for word. He shook his head solemnly, and said he shared her misgivings. "We have caught a Tartar."

On arriving at Vizard Court, they found Miss Gale had called and left two cards.

Open rivalry having now commenced between Uxmoor

and Severne, his lordship was adroit enough to contrive that the drag should be in request next day.

Then Severne got Fanny to convey a note to Zoe, imploring her to open her bedroom window and say good-night to him the last. "For," said he, "I have no coach-and-four, and I am very unhappy."

This and his staying sullenly at home spoilt Zoe's ride, and she was cool to Uxmoor, and spoilt his drive.

At night Zoe peeped through the curtain and saw Severne standing in the moonlight. Her eye drank him in for some time in silence, then she softly opened her window and looked out. He took a step nearer.

She said very softly and tenderly, "You are very naughty and very foolish. Go to bed *di*rectly." And she closed her window with a valiant slam; then sat down and sighed.

Same game next day. Uxmoor driving; Zoe wonderfully polite, but chill; because he was separating her and Severne. At night, Severne on the wet grass, and Zoe remonstrating severely, but not sincerely, and closing the window peremptorily she would have liked to keep open half the night.

It has often been remarked that great things arise out of small things; and sometimes, when in full motion, depend on small things. History offers brilliant examples upon its large stage. Fiction has imitated history in *un verre d'eau* and other compositions. To these examples, real or feigned, I am now about to add one; and the curious reader may, if he thinks it worth while, note the various ramifications at home and abroad of a seemingly trivial incident.

They were all seated at luncheon, when a servant came in with a salver, and said, "A gentleman to see you, sir." He presented his salver with a card upon it. Severne clutched the card, and jumped up reddening.

"Show him in here," said the hospitable Vizard.

"No, no," cried Severne, rather nervously; "it is my lawyer on a little private business."

Vizard told the servant to show the visitor into the library, and take in the madeira and some biscuits.

"It is about a lease," said Ned Severne, and went out rather hurriedly.

"La!" said Fanny, "what a curious name!—Poikilus. And what does S. I. mean, I wonder?"

"This is enigmatical discourse," said Vizard, dryly. "Please explain."

"Why, the card had Poikilus on it."

"You are very inquisitive," said Zoe, coloring.

"No more than my neighbors. But the man put his salver right between our noses, and how could I help seeing Poikilus in large letters, and S. I. in little ones up in the corner?"

Said Vizard, "The female eye is naturally swift. She couldn't help seeing all that in *half a moment of time;* for Ned Severne snatched up the card with vast expedition."

"I saw that too," said Fanny, defiantly.

Uxmoor put in his word. "Poikilus! That is a name one sees in the papers."

"Of course you do. He is one of the humbugs of the day. Pretends to find things out; advertises mysterious disappearances; offers a magnificent reward — with perfect safety, because he has invented the lost girl's features, and dress, and her disappearance into the bargain; — and I hold with the schoolmen, that she who does not exist cannot disappear. Poikilus, a puffing detective. S. I., Secret Inquiry. *I* spell Enquiry with an E, — but Poikilus is a man of the day. What the deuce can Ned Severne want of him? I suppose I ought not to object. I have established a female detective at

Hillstoke. So Ned sets up one at Islip. I shall make my own secret arrangements. If Poikilus settles here, he will be drawn through the horse-pond by small-minded rustics once a week."

Whilst he was going on like this, Zoe felt uncomfortable, and almost irritated by his volubility, and it was a relief to her when Severne returned. He had confided a most delicate case to the detective, given him written instructions, and stipulated for his leaving the house without a word to any one, and, indeed, seen him off, — all in seven minutes. Yet he returned to our party cool as a cucumber, to throw dust in everybody's eyes.

"I must apologize for this intrusion," he said to Vizard; "but my lawyer wanted to consult me about the lease of one of my farms, and finding himself in the neighborhood, he called instead of writing."

"Your lawyer, eh?" said Vizard, slyly. "What is your lawyer's name?"

"Jackson," said Ned, without a moment's hesitation.

Fanny giggled in her own despite.

Instead of stopping here, Severne must go on; it was his unlucky day.

"Not quite a gentleman, you know, or I would have inflicted his society on you."

"Not quite — eh?" said Harrington, so dryly, that Fanny Dover burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

But Zoe turned hot and cold, to see him blundering thus, and telling lie upon lie.

Severne saw there was something wrong, and buried his nose in pigeon-pie. He devoured it with an excellent appetite, while every eye rested on him: Zoe's, with shame and misery: Uxmoor's, with open contempt; Vizard's, with good-humored satire.

The situation became intolerable to Zoe Vizard. Indignant and deeply shocked herself, she still could

not bear to see him the butt of others' ridicule and contempt. She rose haughtily, and marched to the door. He raised his head for a moment, as she went out. She turned, and their eyes met. She gave him such a glance of pity and disdain, as suspended the meat upon his fork, and froze him into comprehending that something very serious indeed had happened.

He resolved to learn from Fanny what it was, and act accordingly. But Zoe's maid came in and whispered Fanny. She went out, and neither of the young ladies was seen till dinner-time. It was conveyed to Uxmoor that there would be no excursion of any kind this afternoon: and therefore he took his hat, and went off to pay a visit. He called on Rhoda Gale. She was at home. He intended merely to offer her his respects, and to side with her generally against these foolish rustics; but she was pleased with him for coming, and made herself so agreeable, that he spent the whole afternoon comparing notes with her upon village life, and the amelioration it was capable of. Each could give the other valuable ideas; and he said he hoped she would visit his part of the country ere long; she would find many defects, but also a great desire to amend them.

This flattered her, naturally; and she began to take an interest in him. That interest soon took the form of curiosity. She must know whether he was seriously courting Zoe Vizard or not. The natural reserve of a well-bred man withstood this at first; but that armor could not resist for two mortal hours such a daughter of Eve as this, with her insidious questions, her artful statements, her cat-like retreats and cat-like returns. She learned — though he did not see how far he had committed himself — that he admired Zoe Vizard, and would marry her to-morrow if she would have him: his hesitation to ask her, because he had a rival, whose power he

could not exactly measure; but a formidable and permitted rival.

They parted almost friends; and Rhoda settled quietly in her mind he should have Zoe Vizard, since he was so fond of her.

Here again it was Severne's unlucky day, and Uxmoor's lucky. To carry this same day to a close, Severne tried more than once to get near Zoe and ask if he had offended her, and in what. But no opportunity occurred. So then he sat and gazed at her, and looked unhappy. She saw, and was not unmoved, but would not do more than glance at him. He resigned himself to wait till night.

Night came. He went on the grass. There was a light in Zoe's room. It was eleven o'clock. He waited, shivering, till twelve. Then the light was put out; but no window opened. There was a moon; and her windows glared black on him, dark and bright as the eyes she now averted from him. He was in disgrace.

The present incident I have recorded did not end here, and I must now follow Poikilus on his mission to Homburg; and, if the reader has a sense of justice, methinks he will not complain of the journey, for see how long I have neglected the noblest figure in this story, and the most to be pitied. To desert her longer would be too unjust, and derange entirely the balance of this complicated story.

CHAPTER XX.

A CRUEL mental stroke, like a heavy blow upon the body, sometimes benumbs and sickens at first, but does not torture; yet that is to follow.

It was so with Ina Klosking. The day she just missed Edward Severne, and he seemed to melt away from her very grasp into the wide world again, she could drag herself to the theatre and sing angelically, with a dull and aching heart. But next day her heart entered on sharper suffering; she was irritated, exasperated; chained to the theatre, to Homburg, yet wild to follow Severne to England without delay. She told Ashmead she must and would go. He opposed it stoutly, and gave good reasons. She could not break faith with the management. England was a large place. They had, as yet, no clew but a name. By waiting, the clew would come. The sure course was to give publicity in England to her winnings, and so draw Severne to her.

But, for once, she was too excited to listen to reason. She was tempest-tossed. "I *will* go — I *will* go," she repeated, as she walked the room wildly, and flung her arms aloft with reckless *abandon*, and yet, with a terrible majesty, an instinctive grace, and all the poetry of a great soul wronged, and driven wild.

She overpowered Ashmead, and drove him to the director; he went most unwillingly; but, once there, was true to her, and begged off the engagement eagerly. The director refused this plump. Then Ashmead, still true to his commission, offered him (most reluctantly) a considerable sum down to annul the contract, and backed

this with a quiet hint that she would certainly fall ill if refused. The director knew by experience what this meant, and how easily these ladies can command the human body to death's door, *pro re nâta*, and how readily a doctor's certificate can be had to say or swear that the great creature cannot sing or act, without peril to life; though really both these arts are grand medicines, and far less likely to injure the *bona fide* sick, than are the certifying doctor's draughts and drugs. The director knew all this; but he was furious at the disappointment threatening him. "No," said he; "this is always the way; a poor devil of a manager is never to have a success. It is treacherous, it is ungrateful; I'll close. You tell her, if she is determined to cut all our throats, and kick her own good fortune down, she can; but, by ——, I'll make her smart for it. Mind, now; she closes the theatre, and pays the expenses, if she plays me false."

"But if she is ill?"

"Let her die and be ——, and then I'll believe her. She is the healthiest woman in Germany. I'll go and take steps to have her arrested, if she offers to leave the town."

Ashmead reported the manager's threats, and the Klosking received them as a lioness the barking of a cur. She drew herself swiftly up, and her great eye gleamed imperial disdain at all his menaces but one.

"He will not really close the theatre," said she loftily, but uneasiness lurked in her manner.

"He will," said Ashmead. "He is desperate; and you know it *is* hard, to go on losing and losing, and then, the moment luck turns, be done out of it, in spite of a written bargain. I've been a manager myself."

"So many poor people!" said Ina with a sigh, and her defiant head sank a little.

"Oh, bother *them!*" said Ashmead craftily. "Let 'em starve."

"God forbid!" said Ina. Then she sighed again, and her queenly head sank lower. Then she faltered out, "I have the will to break faith and ruin poor people, but I have not the courage."

Then a tear or two began to trickle, carrying with them all the egotistical resolution Ina Klosking possessed at that time. Perhaps we shall see her harden; nothing stands still.

This time the poor conquered.

But every now and then, for many days, there were returns of torment and agitation, and wild desire to escape to England.

Ashmead made head against these with his simple arts. For one thing, he showed her a dozen paragraphs in MS. he was sending to as many English weekly papers, describing her heavy gains at the table. "With these stones," said he, "I kill two birds: extend your fame, and entice your idol back to you." Here a growl, which I suspect was an inarticulate curse. Joseph, fie!

The pen of Joseph, on such occasions, was like his predecessor's coat, polychromatic. The Klosking read him, and wondered. "Alas!" said she, "with what versatile skill do you descant on a single circumstance, not very creditable!"

"Creditable!" said Ashmead; "it was very naughty, but it is very nice." And the creature actually winked, forgetting, of course, whom he was winking at, and wasting his vulgarity on the desert air; for the Klosking's eye might just manage to blink — at the meridian sun, or so forth, but it never winked once in all its life. One of the paragraphs ran thus, with a heading in small capitals: —

"A Prima Donna at the Gaming-Table.

"Mademoiselle Klosking, the great contralto, whose success has been already recorded in all the journals, strolled, on one

of her off-nights, into the Kursaal at Homburg, and sat down to *trente et quarante*. Her melodious voice was soon heard betting heavily, with the most engaging sweetness of manner; and, doubling seven times upon the red, she broke the bank, and retired with a charming courtesy, and eight thousand pounds in gold and notes."

Another dealt with the matter thus: —

"Rouge et Noir.

"The latest *coup* at Homburg has been made by a cantatrice, whose praises all Germany are now ringing. Mademoiselle Klosking, successor and rival of Alboni, went to the Kursaal, *pour passer le temps;* and she passed it so well, that in half an hour the bank was broken, and there was a pile of notes and gold before La Klosking, amounting to ten thousand pounds and more. The lady waved these over to her agent, Mr. Joseph Ashmead, with a hand which, *par parenthèse*, is believed to be the whitest in Europe, and retired gracefully."

On perusing this, La Klosking held *two* white hands up to heaven in amazement at the skill and good taste which had dragged this feature into the incident.

"A Dramatic Situation.

"A circumstance has lately occurred here which will infallibly be seized on by the novelists in search of an incident. Mademoiselle Klosking, the new contralto, whose triumphant progress through Europe will probably be the next event in music, walked into the Kursaal the other night, broke the bank, and walked out again with twelve thousand pounds, and that charming composure which is said to distinguish her in private life.

"What makes it more remarkable is, that the lady is not a gamester, has never played before, and is said to have declared that she shall never play again. It is certain that with such a face, figure, and voice, as hers, she need never seek for wealth at the gambling-table. Mademoselle Klosking is now in negotiation with all the principal cities of the Continent. But the

English managers, we apprehend, will prove awkward competitors."

Were I to reproduce the nine other paragraphs, it would be a very curious, instructive, and tedious specimen of literature; and, who knows, I might corrupt some immaculate soul, inspire some actor or actress, singer or songstress, with an itch for public self-laudation, a foible from which they are all at present so free? Witness the "Era," the "Hornet," and "Figaro."

Ina Klosking spotted what she conceived to be a defect in these histories. "My friend," said she, meekly, "the sum I won was under five thousand pounds."

"Was it? Yes, to be sure. But you see these are English advertisements. Now England is so rich, that, if you keep down to any *Continental* sum, you give a false impression in England of the importance on the spot."

"And so we are to falsify figures? In the first of these legends it was double the truth: and, as I read, it enlarges — oh, but it enlarges," said Ina, with a Gallicism we shall have to forgive in a lady who spoke five languages.

"Madam," said Ashmead, dryly, "you must expect your capital to increase rapidly, so long as I conduct it."

Not being herself swift to shed jokes, Ina did not take them rapidly. She stared at him. He never moved a muscle. She gave a slight shrug of her grand shoulders, and resigned that attempt to reason with the creature.

She had a pill in store for him, though. She told him that as she had sacrificed the longings of her heart to the poor of the theatre, so she should sacrifice a portion of her ill-gotten gains to the poor of the town.

He made a hideously wry face at that; asked what poor-rates were for? and assured her that "pauper" meant "drunkard."

"It is not written so in Scripture," said Ina: "and I need their prayers; for I am very unhappy."

In short, Ashmead was driven out from the presence-chamber, with a thousand thalers to distribute amongst the poor of Homburg; and, once in the street, his face did not shine like an angel's of mercy, but was very pinched and morose; hardly recognizable — poor Joe!

By-and-by he scratched his head. Now it is unaccountable; but certain heads often yield an idea in return for that. Joseph's did, and his countenance brightened.

Three days after this, Ina was surprised by a note from the burgomaster, saying that he and certain of the town-council would have the honor of calling on her at noon.

What might this mean?

She sent to ask for Mr. Ashmead; he was not to be found; he had hidden himself too carefully.

The deputation came and thanked her for her munificent act of charity.

She looked puzzled at first, then blushed to the temples. "Munificent act, gentlemen! Alas! I did but direct my agent to distribute a small sum amongst the deserving poor. He has done very ill to court your attention. My little contribution should have been as private as it is insignificant."

"Nay, madam," said the clerk of the council, who was a recognized orator, "your agent did well to consult our worthy burgomaster, who knows the persons most in need and most deserving. We do not doubt that you love to do good in secret. Nevertheless we have also our sense of duty, and we think it right that so benevolent an act should be published, as an example to others. In the same view, we claim to comment publicly on your goodness." Then he looked to the burgomaster, who took him up.

"And we comment thus: Madam, since the middle

ages the freedom of this town has not been possessed by any female. There is, however, no law forbidding it; and, therefore, madam, the civic authorities, whom I represent, do hereby present to you the freedom of this burgh."

He then handed her an emblazoned vellum giving her citizenship, with the reasons written plainly in golden letters.

Ina Klosking, who had remained quite quiet during the speeches, waited a moment or two; and then replied with seemly grace and dignity: —

"Mr. Burgomaster and gentlemen — you have paid me a great and unexpected compliment: and I thank you for it. But one thing makes me uneasy; it is that I have done so little to deserve this. I console myself, however, by reflecting that I am still young, and may have opportunities to show myself grateful, and even to deserve, in the future, this honor, which at presents overpays me, and almost oppresses me. On that understanding, gentlemen, be pleased to bestow, and let me receive, the rare compliment you have paid me by admitting me to citizenship in your delightful town. (To herself) I'll scold him well for this!"

Low courtesy; profound bows; exit deputation enchanted with her; *manet* Klosking with the freedom of the city in her hand, and ingratitude in her heart; for her one idea was to get hold of Mr. Joseph Ashmead directly, and reproach him severely for all this, which she justly ascribed to his machinations.

The cunning Ashmead divined her project, and kept persistently out of her way. That did not suit her neither. She was lonely. She gave the waiter a friendly line to bring him to her. Now, mind you, she was too honest to pretend she was not going to scold him. So this is what she wrote: —

My Friend, — Have you deserted me? Come to me, and be remonstrated. What have you to fear? You know so well how to defend yourself.

Ina Klosking.

Arrived in a very few minutes Mr. Ashmead, jaunty, cheerful, and defensive.

Ina, with a countenance from which all discontent was artfully extracted, laid before him, in the friendliest way you can imagine, an English Bible. It was her father's, and she always carried it with her. "I wish," said she, insidiously, "to consult you on a passage or two of this book. How do you understand this? —

"'When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do.'

"And this? —

"When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.'"

Having pointed out these sentences with her finger, she looked at him for his interpretation. Joseph, thus erected into a Scripture commentator, looked at the passages first near, and then afar off, as if the true interpretation depended on perspective. Having thus gained a little time, he said: "Well, I think the meaning is clear enough. We are to hide our own light under a bushel. But it don't say an agent is to hide his employer's."

"Be serious, sir. This is a great authority."

"Oh, of course, of course. Still — if you won't be offended, ma'am — times are changed since then. It was a very small place, where news spread of itself; and all that cannot be written for theatrical agents, because there wasn't one in creation."

"And so now, their little customs, lately invented, like themselves, are to prevail against God's im-mor-tal law!" It was something half-way between Handel and mellowed thunder, the way her grand contralto suddenly rolled out these three words. Joseph was cunning. He put on a crushed appearance — deceived by which, the firm but gentle Klosking began to soften her tone directly.

"It has given me pain," said she, sorrowfully. "And I am afraid God will be angry with us both for our ostentation."

"Not He," said Joseph, consolingly. "Bless your heart, He is not half so irritable as the parsons fancy! They confound Him with themselves."

Ina ignored this suggestion with perfect dignity, and flowed on: "All I stipulate now is, that I may not see this pitiable parade in print."

"That is past praying for, then," said Ashmead, resolutely. "You might as well try to stop the waves as check publicity — in our day. Your munificence to the poor — confound the lazy lot! — and the gratitude of those pompous prigs, the deputation — the presentation — your admirable reply" —

"You never heard it, now" —

"Which, as you say, I was not so fortunate as to hear, and so must content myself with describing it, — all this is flying north, south, east, and west."

"Oh, no, no, no! You have not *advertised* it."

"Not advertised it? For what do you take me? Wait till you see the bill I am running up against you. Madam, you must take people as they are. Don't try to un-Ashmead *me;* it is impossible. Catch up that knife and kill me. I'll not resist; on the contrary, I'll sit down and prepare an obituary notice for the weeklies, and say I killed *myself.* But WHILST I BREATHE I ADVERTISE."

And Joseph was defiant; and the Klosking shrugged her noble shoulders, and said, "You best of creatures, you are incurable."

To follow this incident to its conclusion: not a week after this scene, Ina Klosking detected, in an English paper —

"A Charitable Act.

"Mademoiselle Klosking, the great contralto, having won a large sum of money at the Kursaal, has given a thousand pounds to the poor of the place. The civic authorities, hearing of this, and desirous to mark their sense of so noble a donation, have presented her with the freedom of the burgh, written on vellum and gold. Mademoiselle Klosking received the compliment with charming grace and courtesy; but her modesty is said to have been much distressed at the publicity hereby given to an act she wished to be known only to the persons relieved by her charity."

Ina caught the culprit, and showed him this. "A thousand pounds!" said she. "Are you not ashamed? Was ever a niggardly act so embellished and exaggerated? I feel my face very red, sir."

"I'll explain that in a moment," said Joseph, amicably. "Each nation has a coin it is always quoting. France counts in francs, Germany in thalers, America in dollars, England in pounds. When a thing costs a million francs in France, or a million dollars in the States, that is always called a million pounds in the English journals; otherwise it would convey no distinct idea at all to an Englishman. Turning thalers and francs into pounds — *that* is not *exaggeration;* it is only *translation.*"

Ina gave him such a look. He replied with an unabashed smile.

She shrugged her shoulders in silence this time, and, to the best of my belief, made no more serious attempts to un-Ashmead her Ashmead.

A month had now passed, and that was a little more than half the dreary time she had to wade through. She began to count the days, and that made her pine all the more. Time is like a kettle. Be blind to him, he flies; watch him, he lags. Her sweet temper was a little affected, and she even reproached Ashmead for holding her out false hopes that his advertisements of her gains would induce Severne to come to her, or even write. "No," said she; "there must be some greater attraction. Karl says that Miss Vizard, who called upon me, was a beauty, and dark. Perhaps she was the lovely girl I saw at the opera. She has never been there since; and he is gone to England with people of that name."

"Well, but that Miss Vizard called on you. She can't intend to steal him from you."

"But she may not know; a woman may injure another without intending. He may deceive her; he has betrayed me. Her extraordinary beauty terrifies me. It enchanted me; and how much more a man?"

Joseph said he thought this was all fancy; and, as for his advertisements, it was too early yet to pronounce on their effect.

The very day after this conversation, he bounced into her room in great dudgeon. "There, madam! the advertisements *have* produced an effect; and not a pleasant one. Here's a detective on to us. He is feeling his way with Karl. I knew the man in a moment — calls himself Poikilus in print, and Smith to talk to; but he is Aaron at the bottom of it all, and can speak several languages. Confound their impudence! putting a detective on to *us*, when it is them that are keeping dark."

"Who do you think has sent him?" asked Ina, intently.

"The party interested, I suppose."

"Interested in what?"

"Why, in the money you won; for he was drawing Karl about that."

"Then, *he* sent the man!" And Ina began to pant and change color.

"Well, now you put it to me, I think so. Come to look at it, it is certain. Who else *could* it be? Here is a brace of sweeps. They wouldn't be the worse for a good kicking. You say the word, and Smith shall have one, at all events."

"Alas, my friend!" said Ina, "for once you are slow. What! a messenger comes here direct from *him*, and are we so dull we can learn nothing from him who comes to question us? Let me think."

She leaned her forehead on her white hand, and her face seemed slowly to fill with intellectual power.

"That man," said she, at last, "is the only link between him and me. I must speak to him."

Then she thought again.

"No, not yet. He must be detained in the house. Letters may come to him, and their postmarks may give us some clew."

"I'll recommend the house to him."

"Oh, that is not necessary! He will lodge here of his own accord. Does he know you?"

"I think not."

"Do not give him the least suspicion that you know he is a detective."

"All right, I won't."

"If he sounds you about the money, say nobody knows much about it, except Mademoiselle Klosking. If you can get the matter so far, come and tell me. But be *you* very reserved, for you are not clear."

Ashmead received these instructions meekly, and went into the *salle à manger*, and ordered dinner. Smith was there, and had evidently got some information from

Karl, for he opened an easy conversation with Ashmead, and it ended in their dining together.

Smith played the open-handed countryman to the life; stood champagne. Ashmead chattered, and seemed quite off his guard. Smith approached the subject cautiously. "Gamble here as much as ever?"

"All day, some of them."

"Ladies and all?"

"Why, the ladies are the worst."

"No; are they, now? Ah, that reminds me. I heard there was a lady in this very house won a pot o' money."

"It is true. I am her agent."

"I suppose she lost it all next day?"

"Well, not all, for she gave a thousand pounds to the poor."

"The dressmakers collared the rest?"

"I cannot say. I have nothing to do, except with her theatrical business. She will make more by that than she ever made at play."

"What, is she tip-top?"

"The most rising singer in Europe."

"I should like to see her."

"That you can easily do. She sings to-night. I'll pass you in."

"You are a good fellow. Have a bit of supper with me afterwards. Bottle of fizz."

These two might be compared to a couple of spiders, each taking the other for a fly. Smith was enchanted with Ina's singing, or pretended. Ashmead was delighted with him, or pretended.

"Introduce me to her," said Smith.

"I dare not do that: you are not professional — are you?"

"No; but you can say I am, for a lark."

Ashmead said he should like to; but it would not do, unless he was very wary.

"Oh, I'm fly!" said the other. "She won't get anything out of me. I've been behind the scenes often enough."

Then Ashmead said he would go and ask her if he might present a London manager to her. He soon brought back the answer. "She is too tired to-night; but I pressed her, and she says she will be charmed if you breakfast with her to-morrow at eleven." He did not say that he was to be with her at half-past ten for special instructions. They were very simple. "My friend," said she, "I mean to tell this man something, which he will think it his duty to telegraph or write to *him* immediately. It was for this I would not have the man to supper, being after post-time. This morning he shall either write or telegraph; and then, if you are as clever in this as you are in some things, you will watch him, and find out the address he sends to."

Ashmead listened very attentively, and fell into a brown study.

"Madam," said he at last, "this is a first-rate combination. You make him communicate with England, and I will do the rest. If he telegraphs, I'll be at his heels. If he goes to the post, I know a way; if he posts in the house, he makes it too easy."

At eleven, Ashmead introduced his friend "Sharpus, manager of Drury Lane Theatre;" and watched the fencing-match with some anxiety, Ina being little versed in guile. But she had tact and self-possession; and she was not an angel, after all, but a woman whose wits were sharpened by love and suffering.

Sharpus, *alias* Smith, played his assumed character to perfection. He gave the Klosking many incidents of business, and professional anecdotes, and was excellent company. The Klosking was gracious, and more *bonne enfant* than Ashmead had ever seen her. It was a fine

match between her and the detective. At last he made his approaches.

"And I hear we are to congratulate you on success at *rouge et noir*, as well as opera. Is it true that you broke the bank?"

"Perfectly," was the frank reply.

"And won a million."

"More or less," said the Klosking, with an open smile.

"I hope it was a good lump, for our countrymen leave hundreds of thousands here every season."

"It was four thousand nine hundred pounds, sir."

"Pheugh! Well, I wish it had been double. You are not so close as our friend here, madam."

"No, sir; and shall I tell you why?"

"If you like, madam," said Smith, with assumed indifference.

"Mr. Ashmead is a model agent; he never allows himself to see anybody's interest but mine. Now, the truth is, another person has an interest in my famous winnings. A gentleman handed twenty-five pounds to Mr. Ashmead to play with. He did not do so; but I came in, and joined twenty-five of my own to that twenty-five pounds, and won an enormous sum. Of course, if the gentleman chooses to be chivalrous, and abandon his claim, he can; but that is not the way of the world, you know. I feel sure he will come to me for his share some day; and the sooner the better, for money burns the pocket."

Sharpus, *alias* Smith, said this was really a curious story. "Now, suppose," said he, "some fine day a letter was to come asking you to remit that gentleman his half, what should you do?"

"I should decline: it might be an *escroc*. No; Mr. Ashmead here knows the gentleman. Do you not?"

"I'll swear to him anywhere."

"Then, to receive his money, he must face the eye of Ashmead. Ha, ha!"

The detective turned the conversation, and never came back to the subject; but shortly he pleaded an engagement, and took his leave.

Ashmead lingered behind, but Ina hurried him off, with an emphatic command not to leave this man out of his sight a moment.

He violated this order; for in five minutes he ran back to tell her, in an agitated whisper, that Smith was, at that moment, writing a letter in the *salle à manger*.

"Oh, pray don't come here!" cried Ina, in despair. "Do not lose sight of him for a moment."

"Give me that letter to post then," said Ashmead, and snatched one up Ina had directed over-night.

He went to the hotel door and lighted a cigar; out came Smith with a letter in his very hand. Ashmead peered with all his eyes; but Smith held the letter vertically in his hand and the address inwards. The letter was sealed.

Ashmead watched him, and saw he was going to the general post. He knew a shorter cut, ran and took it, and lay in wait. As Smith approached the box, letter in hand, he bustled up in a furious hurry, and posted his own letter so as to stop Smith's hand at the very aperture before he could insert his letter. He saw, apologized, and drew back. Smith laughed, and said, "All right, old man. That is to your sweetheart, or you wouldn't be in such a hurry."

"No; it was to my grandmother," said Ashmead.

"Go on," said Smith, and poked the ribs of Joseph. They went home jocular; but the detective was no sooner out of the way, than Ashmead stole up to Ina Klosking, and put his finger to his lips; for Karl was clearing away, and in no hurry.

They sat on tenter-hooks, and thought he never would

go. He did go at last, and then the Klosking and Ashmead came together like two magnets.

"Well?"

"All right! Letter to post. Saw address quite plain. — Edward Severne, Esq."

"Yes."

"Vizard Court."

"Ah!"

"Taddington — Barfordshire — England."

Ina, who was standing all on fire, now sat down and interlaced her hands. "Vizard!" said she, gloomily.

"Yes; Vizard Court," said Ashmead, triumphantly; that means he is a large landed proprietor, and you will easily find him if he is there in a month."

"He will be there," said Ina. "She is very beautiful. She is dark, too, and he loves change. Oh, if to all I have suffered, he adds *that*" —

"Then you will forgive him *that*," said Ashmead, shaking his head.

"Never. Look at me, Joseph Ashmead."

He looked at her with some awe, for she seemed transformed, and her Danish eye gleamed strangely.

"You, who have seen my torments and my fidelity, mark what I say: If he is false to me with another woman, I shall kill him — or else I shall hate him."

She took her desk and wrote, at Ashmead's dictation:

"Vizard Court,
Taddington,
Barfordshire."

CHAPTER XXI.

The next morning, Vizard carried Lord Uxmoor away to a magistrate's meeting, and left the road clear to Severne: but Zoe gave him no opportunity until just before luncheon, and then she put on her bonnet and came down-stairs; but Fanny was with her.

Severne, who was seated patiently in his bedroom with the door ajar, came out to join them, feeling sure Fanny would openly side with him, or slip away and give him his opportunity.

But, as the young ladies stood on the broad flight of steps at the hall door, an antique figure drew nigh — an old lady, the shape of an egg, so short and stout was she. On her head she wore a black silk bonnet constructed many years ago, with a droll design — viz., to keep off sun, rain, and wind; it was like an iron coal-scuttle, slightly shortened; yet have I seen some very pretty faces very prettily framed in such a bonnet. She had an old black silk gown that only reached to her ankle, and over it a scarlet cloak of superfine cloth, fine as any colonel or queen's outrider ever wore, and looking splendid, though she had used it forty years at odd times. This dame had escaped the village ill, rheumatics, and could toddle along without a staff, at a great and, indeed, a fearful pace; for owing to her build, she yawed so from side to side at every step, that, to them who knew her not, a capsize appeared inevitable.

"Mrs. Judge, I declare," cried Zoe.

"Ay, miss, Hannah Judge it is. Your servant, ma'am;" and she dropped two courtesies, one for each lady.

Mrs. Judge was Harrington's old nurse. Zoe often paid a visit to her cottage, but she never came to Vizard Court except on Harrington's birthday, when the servants entertained all the old pensioners and retainers at supper. Her sudden appearance, therefore, and in gala costume, astonished Zoe. Probably Zoe's face betrayed this, for the old lady began, "You wonder to see me here, now doan't ye?"

"Well, Mrs. Judge," said Zoe, diplomatically, "nobody has a better right to come."

"You be very good, miss. I don't doubt my welcome nohow."

"But," said Zoe, playfully, "you seldom do us the honor; so I *am* a little surprised. What can I do for you?"

"You does enough for me, miss, you and young Squire. I bain't come to ask no favors. I ain't one o' that sort. I'll tell ye why I be come. 'Tis to warn you all up here."

"This is alarming," said Zoe to Fanny.

"That is as may be," said Mrs. Judge: "forewarned, forearmed, the by-word sayeth. There is a young 'oman a-prowling about this here parish, as don't belong to *hus*."

"La!" said Fanny; "mustn't we visit your parish, if we were not born there?"

"Don't you take me up before I be down, miss," said the old nurse, a little severely. "'Tain't for the likes of you I speak, which you are a lady, and visits the Court by permission of Squire; but what I objects to is — hinterlopers." She paused, to see the effect of so big a word, and then resumed, graciously, "You see most of our hills comes from that there Hillstoke. If there's a poacher, or a thief, he is Hillstoke. They harbors the gypsies as ravages the whole country, mostly; and now they have let loose this here young 'oman on to us. She is a Poll Pry: goes about the town a-sarching:

pries into their housen, and their vittels, and their very beds. Old Marks have got a muckheap at his door; for his garden, ye know. Well, miss, she sticks her parasole into this here, and turns it about as if she was a-going to spread it: says she, 'I must know the de-com-po-sition of this 'ere as you keeps under the noses of your young folk.' Well, I seed her a-going her rounds, and the folk had told me her ways; so I did set me down to my knitting and wait for her; and, when she came to me, I offered her a seat; so she sat herself down, and says she, 'This is the one clean house in the village,' says she: 'you might eat your dinner off the floor, let alone the chairs and tables.' 'You are very good, miss,' says I. Says she, 'I wonder whether upstairs is as nice as this?' 'Well,' says I, 'them as keeps it down-stairs keeps it hup; I don't drop cleanliness on the stairs, you may be sure.' 'I suppose not,' says she, 'but I should like to see.' That was what I was a-waiting for, you know, so I said to her, 'Curiosity do breed curiosity,' says I. 'Afore you sarches this here house from top to bottom, I should like to see the warrant.' 'What warrant?' says she. 'I've no warrant. Don't take me for an enemy,' says she. 'I'm your best friend,' says she. 'I'm the new doctor.' I told her I had heard a whisper of that too: but we had got a parish doctor already, and one was enough. 'Not when he never comes anigh you,' says she, 'and lets you go half-way to meet your diseases.' 'I don't know for that,' says I, and indeed I haan't a notion what she meant, for my part; but, says I, 'I don't want no women-folk to come here a-doctoring o' me, that's sartin.' So she said, 'But suppose you were very ill, and the he-doctor three miles off, and fifty others to visit afore you?' 'That is no odds,' says I; 'I would not be doctored by a woman.' Then she says to me, says she,

'Now you look me in the face.' 'I can do that," says I, 'you, or anybody else. I'm an honest woman, *I* am;' so I up and looked her in the face as bold as brass. 'Then,' says she, 'am I to understand that, if you was to be ill to-morrow, you would rather die than be doctored by a woman?' She thought to daant me, you see, so I says, 'Well, I don't know as I oodn't.' You do laugh, miss. Well, that is what she did. 'All right,' says she. 'Make haste and die, my good soul,' says she, 'for, while you live, you'll be a hobelisk to reform.' So she went off; but I made to the door, and called after her I should die when God pleased, and I had seen a good many young folk laid out, that looked as like to make old bones as ever she does — chalk-faced — skinny — to-a-d! And I called after her she was no lady. No more she ain't, to come into my own house and call a decent woman 'a hobelisk'! Oh! oh! Which I never *was*, not even in my giddy days, but did work hard in my youth, and arn respect for my old age."

"Yes, nurse, yes; who doubts it?"

"And nursed young Squire, and, Lord bless your heart! a was a poor puny child when I took him to my breast, and in six months the finest chubbiest boy in all the parish; and his dry nurse for years arter, and always at his heels a-keeping him out of the stable and the ponds and consorting with the village boys; and a proper resolute child he was, and hard to manage: and my own man that is gone, and my son 'that's not so clever as some,'[1] I always done justice by them both; and after all to be called a hobelisk, oh! oh! oh!"

Then behold the gentle Zoe with her arm round nurse's neck, and her handkerchief to nurse's eyes, murmuring, "There — there — don't cry, nurse — everybody esteems

[1] Paraphrase for the noun substantive "idiot." It is also a specimen of the Greek figure "Litotes."

you; and that lady did not mean to affront you; she did not say 'obelisk,' she said 'obstacle;' that only means that you stand in the way of her improvements; there was not much harm in that, you know. And, nurse, please give that lady her way, to oblige me; for it is by my brother's invitation she is here."

"Ye doan't say so. What! does he hold with female she-doctoresses?"

"He wishes to *try* one. She has his authority."

"Ye doan't say so."

"Indeed I do."

"Con—sarn the wench; why couldn't she say so, 'stead o' hargefying?"

"She is a stranger, and means well; so she did not think it necessary. You must take my word for it."

"La, miss, I'll take your'n before hers, you *may* be sure," said Mrs. Judge, with a decided remnant of hostility.

And now a proverbial incident happened. Miss Rhoda Gale came in sight, and walked rapidly into the group.

After greeting the ladies and ignoring Severne, who took off his hat to her, with deep respect, in the background, she turned to Mrs. Judge. "Well, old lady," said she, cheerfully, "and how do you do?"

Mrs. Judge replied in fawning accents, "Thank you, miss, I be well enough to get about. I was a-telling 'em about you — and, to be sure, it is uncommon good of a lady like you to trouble so much about poor folk."

"Don't mention it: it is my duty, and my inclination. You see, my good woman, it is not so easy to cure diseases as people think; therefore it is a part of medicine to prevent them: and to prevent them you must remove the predisposing causes, and to find out all those causes you must have eyes, and use them."

"You are right, miss," said La Judge, obsequiously.

"Prevention is better nor cure, and they say, 'a stitch in time saves nine.'"

"That is capital good sense, Mrs. Judge; and pray tell the villagers that, and make them as full of the 'wisdom of nations' as you seem to be, and their houses as clean — if you can."

"I'll do my best, miss," said Mrs. Judge, obsequiously; "it is the least we can all do for a young lady like you, that leaves the pomps and vanities, and gives her mind to bettering the condishing of poor folk."

Having once taken this cue and entered upon a vein of flattery, she would have been extremely voluble — for villages can vie with cities in adulation as well as in detraction — but she was interrupted by a footman announcing luncheon.

Zoe handed Mrs. Judge over to the man with a request that he would be kind to her, and have her to dine with the servants.

Yellowplush saw the gentlefolks away, and then, parting his legs, and putting his thumbs into his waistcoat-pockets, delivered himself thus: "Well, old girl, am I to give you my harm round to the kitchen; or do you know the way by yourself?"

"Young chap," said Mrs. Judge, and turned a glittering eye, "I did know the way afore you was born; and I should know it all one if so be you was to be hung, or sent to Botany Bay — to larn manners."

Having delivered this shot, she rolled away in the direction of Roast Beef.

The little party had hardly settled at the table, when they were joined by Vizard and Uxmoor; both gentlemen welcomed Miss Gale more heartily than the ladies had done, and before luncheon ended, Vizard asked her if her report was ready. She said it was.

"Have you got it with you?"

"Yes."

"Then please hand it to me."

"Oh, it is in my head! I don't write much down; that weakens the memory. If you would give me half an hour after luncheon" — she hesitated a little.

Zoe jealoused a *tête-à-tête*, and parried it skilfully. "Oh," said she, "but we are all much interested: are not you, Lord Uxmoor?"

"Indeed I am," said Uxmoor.

"So am I," said Fanny, who didn't care a button.

"Yes, but," said Rhoda, "truths are not always agreeable, and there are some that I don't like" — she hesitated again, and this time actually blushed a little.

The acute Mr. Severne, who had been watching her slyly, came to her assistance. "Look here, old fellow," said he to Vizard; "don't you see that Miss Gale has discovered some spots in your Paradise? but out of delicacy, does not want to publish them, but to confide them to your own ear. Then you can mend them or not."

Miss Gale turned her eyes full on Severne. "You are very keen at reading people, sir," said she, dryly.

"Of course he is," said Vizard. "He has given great attention to your sex. Well, if that is all, Miss Gale, pray speak out and gratify their curiosity. You and I shall never quarrel over the truth."

"I'm not so sure of that," said Miss Gale. "However, I suppose I must risk it. I never do get my own way; that's a fact."

After this little ebullition of spleen, she opened her budget. "First of all, I find that these villages all belong to one person; so does the soil: nobody can build cottages on a better model, nor make any other improvement; you are an absolute monarch. This is a piece of Russia, not England. They are all serfs, and you are the Tsar."

"It is true," said Vizard, "and it sounds horrid; but it works benignly. Every snob who can grind the poor does grind them; but a gentleman never, and he hinders others. Now, for instance, an English farmer is generally a tyrant; but my power limits his tyranny. He may discharge his laborer; but he can't drive him out of the village, nor rob him of parish relief, for poor Hodge is *my* tenant, not a snob's. Nobody can build a beer-shop in Islip. That is true. But if they could, they would sell bad beer, give credit in the ardor of competition, poison the villagers, and demoralize them. Believe me, republican institutions are beautiful on paper; but they would not work well in Barfordshire villages. However, you profess to go by experience in everything. There are open villages within five miles. I'll give you a list. Visit them. You will find that liberty can be the father of tyranny. Petty tradesmen have come in and built cottages, and ground the poor down with rents unknown in Islip; farmers have built cottages, and turned their laborers into slaves. Drunkenness, dissipation, poverty, disaffection, and misery — that is what you will find in the open villages. Now, in Islip you have an omnipotent squire, and that is an abomination in theory — a mediæval monster, a blot on modern civilization; but practically the poor monster is a softener of poverty — an incarnate buffer between the poor and tyranny, the poor and misery."

"I'll inspect the open villages, and suspend my opinion till then," said Miss Gale, heartily; "but, in the meantime, you must admit that where there is great power there is great responsibility."

"Oh, of course."

"Well, then, your little outlying province of Hillstoke is full of rheumatic adults and putty-faced children. The two phenomena arise from one cause — the water.

No lime in it; and too many reptiles. It was the children gave me the clew. I suspected the cherry-stones at first: but when I came to look into it, I found that they eat just as many cherry-stones in the valley, and are as rosy as apples; but then there is well-water in the valleys. So I put this and that together, and I examined the water they drink at Hillstoke. Sir, it is full of animalcules. Some of these cannot withstand the heat of the human stomach; but others can, for I tried them in mud artifically heated. (A giggle from Fanny Dover.) Thanks to your microscope, I have made sketches of several infusoria who live in those boys' stomachs, and irritate their membranes, and share their scanty nourishment, besides other injuries." Thereupon she produced some drawings. They were handed round, and struck terror in gentle bosoms. "Oh, gracious!" cried Fanny, "one ought to drink nothing but champagne." Uxmoor looked grave. Vizard affected to doubt their authenticity. He said, "You may not know it, but I am a zoölogist, and these are antediluvian eccentricities, that have long ceased to embellish the world we live in. Fie, Miss Gale! Down with anachronisms."

Miss Gale smiled, and admitted that one or two of the prodigies resembled antediluvian monsters: but said oracularly that Nature was fond of producing the same thing on a large scale and a small scale; and it was quite possible the small type of antediluvian monster might have survived the large.

"That is most ingenious," said Vizard; "but it does not account for this fellow. He is not an antediluvian. He is a barefaced modern: for he is A STEAM-ENGINE."

This caused a laugh, for the creature had a perpendicular neck, like a funnel, that rose out of a body like a horizontal cylinder.

"At any rate," said Miss Gale, "the little monster

was in the world before us; so he is not an imitation of man's work."

"Well," said Vizard, "after all, we have had enough of the monsters of the deep. Now we can vary the monotony, and say the monsters of the shallow. But I don't see how they can cause rheumatism."

"I never said they did," retorted Miss Gale, sharply: "but the water which contains them is soft water. There is no lime in it, and that is bad for the bones in every way. Only the children drink it as it is: the wives boil it, and so drink soft water and dead reptiles in their tea. The men instinctively avoid it, and drink nothing but beer. Thus for want of a pure diluent with lime in solution, an acid is created in the blood which produces gout in the rich, and rheumatism in the poor, thanks to their meagre food, and exposure to the weather."

"Poor things!" said womanly Zoe. "What is to be done?"

"La," said Fanny, "throw lime into the ponds: that will kill the monsters, and cure the old people's bones into the bargain."

This compendious scheme struck the imagination, but did not satisfy the judgment, of the assembly.

"Fanny!" said Zoe, reproachfully.

"That *would* be killing two birds with one stone," suggested Uxmoor, satirically.

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," explained Vizard, composedly.

Zoe reiterated her question, what was to be done?

Miss Gale turned to her with a smile. "*We* have nothing to do but to point out these abominations. The person to act is the Russian autocrat, the paternal dictator, the monarch of all he surveys, and advocate of monarchical institutions. He is the buffer between the poor and all their ills, especially poison — he must dig a well."

Every eye being turned on Vizard to see how he took this, he said, a little satirically: "What! Does science bid me bore for water at the top of a hill?"

"She does *so*," said the virago. "Now look here, good people."

And although they were not all good people, yet they all did look there; she shone so with intelligence, being now quite on her mettle.

"Half-civilized man makes blunders that both the savage and the civilized avoid. The savage builds his hut by a running stream. The civilized man draws good water to his door, though he must lay down pipes from a highland lake to a lowland city. It is only half-civilized man that builds a village on a hill, and drinks worms, and snakes, and efts, and antediluvian monsters in limeless water. Then I say, if great but half-civilized monarchs would consult Science *before* they built their serf-huts, Science would say, 'Don't you go and put down human habitations far from pure water — the universal diluent — the only cheap diluent — and the only liquid which does not require digestion, and therefore must always assist and never chemically resist the digestion of solids.' But when the mischief is done, and the cottages are built on a hill three miles from water, then all that science can do is to show the remedy, and the remedy is — boring."

"Then the remedy is like the discussion," said Fanny Dover, very pertly.

Zoe was amused but shocked. Miss Gale turned her head on the offender, as sharp as a bird. "Of course it is to *children*," said she; "and that is why I wished to confine it to mature minds. It is to you I speak, sir. Are your subjects to drink poison, or will you bore me a well? — Oh, please!"

"Do your hear that?" said Vizard, piteously, to

Uxmoor. "Threatened and cajoled in one breath. Who can resist this fatal sex? — Miss Gale, I will bore a well on Hillstoke common. Any idea how deep we must go — to the antipodes, or only to the centre?"

"Three hundred and thirty feet, or thereabouts."

"No more? Any idea what it will cost?"

"Of course I have. The well, the double windlass, the iron chain, the two buckets, a cupola over the well, and twenty-three keys, one for every head of a house in the hamlet, will cost you about three hundred and fifteen pounds."

"Why, this is Detail made woman. How do you know all this?"

"From Tom Wilder."

"Who is he?"

"What! don't you know? he is the eldest son of the Islip blacksmith, and a man that will make his mark. He casts every Thursday night. He is the only village blacksmith in all the county who *casts*. You know that, I suppose."

"No; I had not the honor."

"Well, he is then: and I thought you would consent, because you are so good; and so I thought there could be no harm in sounding Tom Wilder. He offers to take the whole contract, if Squire's agreeable; bore the well; brick it fifty yards down: he says that ought to be done, if she is to have justice. 'She' is the well: and he will also construct the gear. He says there must be two iron chains and two buckets going together; so then the empty bucket descending will help the man or woman at the windlass to draw the full bucket up. Three hundred and fifteen pounds. — One week's income, your majesty."

"She has inspected our rent-roll, now," said Vizard, pathetically; "and knows nothing about the matter."

"Except that it is a mere flea-bite to you to bore through a hill for water. For all that, I hope you will leave me to battle it with Tom Wilder; then you won't be cheated for once. *You always are*, and it is abominable. It would have been five hundred if you had opened the business."

"I am sure that is true," said Zoe. She added, this would please Mrs. Judge: she was full of the superiority of Islip to Hillstoke.

"Stop a bit," said Vizard. "Miss Gale has not reported on Islip yet."

"No, dear; but she has looked into everything, for Mrs. Judge told me. You have been into the cottages?"

"Yes."

"Into Mark's?"

"Yes, I have been into Mark's."

She did not seem inclined to be very communicative; so Fanny, out of mischief, said pertly, "And what did you see there — with your Argus eye?"

"I saw — three generations."

"Ha, ha! La! did you now? And what were they all doing?"

"They were all living together, night and day, in one room."

This conveyed no very distinct idea to the ladies; but Vizard, for the first time, turned red at this revelation before Uxmoor, improver of cottage life. "Confound the brutes!" said he. "Why, I built them a new room — a larger one; didn't you see it?"

"Yes. They stack their potatoes in it."

"Just like my people," said Uxmoor. "That is the worst of it; they resist their own improvement."

"Yes, but," said the doctress, "with monarchical power we can trample on them for their good. Outside Mark's door at the back there is a muck-heap, as he

calls it; all the refuse of the house is thrown there: it is a horrible melange of organic matter and decaying vegetables, a hotbed of malaria. Suffocated and poisoned with the breath of a dozen persons, they open the window for fresh air, and in rushes fever from the stronghold its victims have built. Two children were buried from that house last year. They were both killed by the domestic arrangements as certainly as if they had been shot with a double-barrelled pistol. The outside roses you admire so are as delusive as flattery; their sweetness covers a foul, unwholesome den."

"Mark's cottage! The show place of the village!" Zoe Vizard flushed with indignation at the bold hand of truth so rudely applied to a pleasant and cherished illusion.

Vizard, more candid and open to new truths, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "What can I do more than I have done?"

"Oh, it is not your fault," said the doctress, graciously; "it is theirs. Only, as you are their superior in intelligence and power, you might do something to put down indecency, immorality, and disease."

"May I ask what?"

"Well, you might build a granary for the poor people's potatoes. No room can keep them dry; but you build your granary upon four pillars: then that is like a room over a cellar."

"Well, I'll build it so — if I build it at all," said Vizard, dryly. What next?"

"Then you could make them stack their potatoes in the granary, and use the spare room, and so divide their families, and give morality a chance. The muck-heap you should disperse at once with the strong hand of power."

At this last proposal, Squire Vizard — the truth must

be told — delivered a long ploughman's whistle at the head of his own table.

"Pheugh!" said he; "for a lady that is more than half republican, you seem to be taking very kindly to monarchical tyranny."

"Well, now, I'll tell you the truth," said she. "You have converted me. Ever since you promised me the well, I have discovered that the best form of government is a good-hearted tyrant."

"With a female viceroy over him, eh?"

"Only in these little domestic matters," said Rhoda, deprecatingly: "women are good advisers in such things. The male physician relies on drugs. Medical women are wanted to moderate that delusion; to prevent disease by domestic vigilance, and cure it by well-selected esculents and pure air. These will cure fifty for one that medicine can: besides, drugs kill ever so many; these never killed a creature. You will give me the granary, won't you? Oh, and there's a black pond in the centre of the village. Your tenant Pickett, who is a fool — begging his pardon — lets all his liquid manure run out of his yard into the village till it accumulates in a pond right opposite the five cottages they call New Town; and its exhalations taint the air. There are as many fevers in Islip as in the back-slums of a town. You might fill the pond up with chalk, and compel Pickett to sink a tank in his yard, and cover it; then an agricultural treasure would be preserved for its proper use, instead of being perverted into a source of infection."

Vizard listened civilly, and, as she stopped, requested her to go on.

"I think we have had enough," said Zoe bitterly.

Rhoda, who was in love with Zoe, hung her head, and said, "Yes; I have been very bold."

"Fiddlestick!" said Vizard. "Never mind those

girls; *you* speak out like a man; a stranger's eye always discovers things that escape the natives. Proceed."

"No; I won't proceed till I have explained to Miss Vizard."

"You may spare yourself the trouble. Miss Vizard thought Islip was a paradise. You have dispelled the illusion, and she will never forgive you. Miss Dover will; because she is like Gallio — she careth for none of these things."

"Not a pin," said Fanny, with admirable frankness.

"Well, but," said Rhoda, naïvely, "I can't bear Miss Vizard to be angry with me; I admire her so. Please let me explain. Islip is no paradise — quite the reverse; but the faults of Islip are not *your* faults. The children are ignorant; but you pay for school. The people are poor from insufficient wages; but you are not paymaster. *Your* gardeners, *your* hinds, and all your out-door people have enough. You give them houses. You let cottages and gardens to the rest at half their value; and very often they don't pay that, but make excuses; and you accept them, though they are all stories; for they can pay everybody but you, and their one good bargain is with you. Miss Vizard has carried a basket all her life with things from your table for the poor."

Miss Vizard blushed crimson at this sudden revelation.

"If a man or a woman has served your house long, there's a pension for life. You are easy, kind, and charitable. It is the faults of others I ask you to cure, because you have such power. Now, for instance, if the boys at Hillstoke are putty-faced, the boys at Islip have no calves to their legs. That is a sure sign of a deteriorating species. The lower type of savage has next to no calf. The calf is a sign of civilization and due nourishment. This single phenomenon was my clew, and led me to others; and I have examined the mothers and the

people of all ages, and I tell you it is a village of starvelings. Here a child begins life a starveling, and ends as he began. The nursing-mother has not food enough for one, far less for two. The man's wages are insufficient, and the diet is not only insufficient, but injudicious. The race has declined. There are only five big, strong men in Islip — Josh Grace, Will Hudson, David Wilder, Absalom Green, and Jack Greenaway; and they are all over fifty — men of another generation. I have questioned these men how they were bred, and they all say milk was common when they were boys. Many poor people kept a cow; Squire doled it; the farmers gave it, or sold it cheap; but nowadays it is scarcely to be had. Now that is not your fault, but you are the man who can mend it. New milk is meat and drink, especially to young and growing people. You have a large meadow at the back of the village. If you could be persuaded to start four or five cows, and let somebody sell their new milk to the poor at cost price — say five farthings the quart. You must not give it, or they will water their muck-heaps with it. With those cows alone you will get rid, in the next generation, of the half-grown, slouching men, the hollow-eyed, narrow-chested, round-backed women, and the calfless boys one sees all over Islip, and restore the stalwart race that filled the little village under your sires, and have left proofs of their wholesome food on the tombstones: for I have read every inscription, and far more people reached eighty-five between 1750 and 1800 than between 1820 and 1870. Ah! how I envy you to be able to do such great things so easily! Water to poisoned Hillstoke with one hand; milk to starved Islip with the other. This is to be indeed a king!"

The enthusiast rose from the table in her excitement, and her face was transfigured; she looked beautiful for the moment.

"I'll do it," shouted Vizard; "and you are a trump."

Miss Gale sat down, and the color left her cheek entirely.

Fanny Dover, who had a very quick eye for passing events, cried out, "Oh dear! she is going to faint *now*." The tone implied, what a diversified plague she is!

Thereupon Severne rushed to her, and was going to sprinkle her face; but she faltered, "No, no! a glass of wine." He gave her one with all the hurry and *empressement* in the world. She fixed him with a strange look as she took it from him: she sipped it; one tear ran into it. She said she had excited herself. But she was all right now. Elastic Rhoda!

"I am very glad of it," said Vizard. "You are quite strong enough, without fainting. For heaven's sake, don't add woman's weakness to your artillery, or you will be irresistible; and I shall have to divide Vizard Court amongst the villagers. At present I get off cheap, and science on the rampage: let me see, only a granary — a well — and six cows."

"They'll give us as much milk as twelve cows without the well," said Fanny; it was her day for wit.

This time she was rewarded with a general laugh.

It subsided, as such things will, and then Vizard said, solemnly, "New ideas are suggested to me by this charming interview; and permit me to give them a form which will doubtless be new to these accomplished ladies.

'Gin there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,
And faith he'll prent it.'

Zoe looked puzzled, and Fanny inquired what language that was.

"Very good language."

"Then perhaps you will translate it into language one can understand?"

"The English of the day, eh?"

"Yes."

"You think that would improve it, do you? Well then —

If there is a defect in any one of your habiliments,
Let me earnestly impress on you the expediency of repairing it;
An individual is amongst you with singular powers of observation,
Which will infallibly result in printing and publication.

Zoe, you are an affectionate sister; take this too observant lady into the garden, poison her with raw fruit, and bury her under a pear-tree."

Zoe said she would carry out part of the programme, if Miss Gale would come.

Then the ladies rose and rustled away, and the rivals would have followed, but Vizard detained them on the pretence of consulting them about the well; but, when the ladies had gone, he owned he had done it out of his hatred to the sex. He said he was sure both girls disliked his virago in their hearts, so he had compelled them to spend an hour together, without any man to soften their asperity.

This malicious experiment was tolerably successful. The three ladies strolled together, dismal as souls in purgatory. One or two little attempts at conversation were made, but died out for want of sympathy. Then Fanny tried personalities, the natural topic of the sex in general.

"Miss Gale, which do you admire most, Lord Uxmoor, or Mr. Severne?"

"For their looks?"

"Oh, of course!"

"Mr. Severne."

"You don't admire beards, then?"

"That depends. Where the mouth is well shaped and expressive, the beard spoils it. Where it is commonplace, the beard hides its defect, and gives a manly character. As a general rule, I think the male bird looks well with his crest and feathers."

"And so do I," said Fanny warmly; "and yet I should not like Mr. Severne to have a beard. Don't you think he is very handsome?"

"He is something more," said Rhoda: "he is beautiful. If he was dressed as a woman, the gentlemen would all run after him. I think his is the most perfect oval face I ever saw."

"But you must not fall in love with him," said Fanny.

"I do not mean to," said Rhoda. "Falling in love is not my business; and, if it was, I should not select Mr. Severne."

"Why not, pray?" inquired Zoe, haughtily. Her manner was so menacing, that Rhoda did not like to say too much just then. She felt her way.

"I am a physiogomist," said she, "and I don't think he can be very truthful. He is old of his age, and there are premature marks under his eyes that reveal craft, and, perhaps, dissipation. These are hardly visible in the room, but they are in the open air, when you get the full light of day. To be sure, just now his face is marked with care and anxiety; that young man has a good deal on his mind."

Here the observer discovered that even this was a great deal too much. Zoe was displeased, and felt affronted by her remarks, though she did not condescend to notice them, so Rhoda broke off, and said, "It is not

fair of you, Miss Dover, to set me giving my opinion of people you must know better than I do. Oh, what a garden!" And she was off directly on a tour of inspection. "Come along," said she, "and I will tell you their names and properties."

They could hardly keep up with her, she was so eager. The fruits did not interest her, but only the simples. She was downright learned in these, and found a surprising number. But the fact is, Mr. Lucas had a respect for his predecessors. What they had planted he seldom uprooted — at least, he always left a specimen. Miss Gale approved his system highly, until she came to a row of leaves planted by the side of the horseradish.

"This is too bad, even for Islip," said Miss Gale. "Here is one of our deadliest poisons, planted by the very side of an esculent root, which it resembles. You don't happen to have hired the devil for gardener at any time, do you? Just fancy! any cook might come out here for horseradish, and gather this plant, and lay you all dead at your own table. It is the *Aconitum* of medicine, the monk's-hood, or wolf's-bane, of our ancestors. Call the gardener, please, and have every bit of it pulled up by the roots. None of your lives are safe while poisons and esculents are planted together like this."

And she would not budge till Zoe directed a gardener to dig up all the aconite. A couple of them went to work, and soon uprooted it. The gardeners then asked if they should burn it.

"Not for all the world," said Miss Gale. "Make a bundle of it for me to take home. It is only poison in the hands of ignoramuses. It is most sovereign medicine. I shall make tinctures, and check many a sharp ill with it. Given in time, it cuts down fever wonderfully; and, when you check the fever, you check the disease."

Soon after this, Miss Gale said she had not come to stop; she was on her way to Taddington to buy lint and German styptics, and many things useful in domestic surgery· "for," said she, "the people at Hillstoke are relentless; at least, they run to me with their cut fingers and black eyes, though they won't trust me with their sacred rheumatics. I must also supply myself with vermifuges till the well is dug, and so mitigate puerile puttiness and internal torments."

The other ladies were not sorry to get rid of an irrelevant zealot, who talked neither love nor dress, nor anything that reaches the soul.

So Zoe said, "What! going already?" and, having paid that tax to politeness, returned to the house with alacrity.

But the doctress would not go without her wolf's-bane, aconite yclept.

The irrelevant zealot being gone, the true business of the mind was resumed; and that is love-making, or novelists give us false pictures of life, and that is impossible.

As the doctress drove from the front door, Lord Uxmoor emerged from the library, a coincidence that made both girls smile; he hoped Miss Vizard was not too tired to take another turn.

"Oh, no!" said Zoe; "are you, Fanny?"

At the first step they took, Severne came round an angle of the building, and joined them. He had watched from the balcony of his bedroom.

Both men looked black at each other, and made up to Zoe. She felt uncomfortable, and hardly knew what to do. However, she would not seem to observe, and was polite, but a little stiff, to both.

However, at last, Severne, having asserted his rights, as he thought, gave way, but not without a sufficient

motive, as may be gathered from his first word to Fanny.

"My dear friend — for heaven's sake, what is the matter? She is angry with me about something. What is it? has she told you?"

"Not a word. But I see she is in a fury with you; and, really, it is too ridiculous. You told a fib: that is the mighty matter I do believe. No, it isn't, for you have told her a hundred, no doubt, and she liked you all the better; but this time you have been naughty enough to be found out, and she is romantic, and thinks her lover ought to be the soul of truth."

"Well, and so he ought," said Ned.

"He isn't, then;" and Fanny burst out laughing so loud that Zoe turned round, and enveloped them both in one haughty glance, as the exaggerating Gaul would say.

"La! there was a look for you!" said Fanny, pertly; "as if I cared for her black brows."

"I do, though: pray remember that."

"Then tell no more fibs. Such a fuss about nothing. What is a fib?" and she turned up her little nose very contemptuously at all such trivial souls as minded a little mendacity.

Indeed, she disclaimed the importance of veracity so imperiously that Severne was betrayed into saying, "Well, not much, between you and me: and I'll be bound I can explain it."

"Explain it to me, then."

"Well, but I don't know" —

"Which of your fibs it was."

Another silver burst of laughter. But Zoe only vouchsafed a slightly contemptuous movement of her shoulders.

"Well, no," said Severne, half laughing himself at the sprightly jade's smartness.

"Well, then, that friend of yours that called at luncheon."

Severne turned grave directly. "Yes," said he.

"You said he was your lawyer, and came about a lease."

"So he did."

"And his name was Jackson."

"So it was."

"This won't do. You mustn't fib to *me!* It was Poikilus, a Secret Inquiry; and they all know it: now tell me, without a fib — if you can — what ever did you want with Poikilus?"

Severne looked aghast. He faltered out, "Why, how could they know?"

"Why, he advertises — stupid — and Lord Uxmoor and Harrington had seen it. Gentlemen *read* advertisements. That is one of their peculiarities.'

"Of course he advertises: that is not what I mean. I did not drop his card, did I? No, I am sure I pocketed it directly. What mischief-making villain told them it was Poikilus?"

Fanny colored a little, but said, hastily, "Ah, that I could not tell you."

"The footman, perhaps?"

"I should not wonder." [What is a fib?]

"Curse him!"

"Oh, don't swear at the servants; that is bad taste."

"Not when he has ruined me?"

"Ruined you? Nonsense! Make up some other fib, and excuse the first."

"I can't. I don't know what to do; and before my rival, too. This accounts for the air of triumph he has worn ever since, and her glances of scorn and pity. She is an angel, and I have lost her."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Fanny Dover. "Be a man, and tell me the truth."

"Well, I will," said he; "for I am in despair. It is

al. that cursed money at Homburg. I could not clear my estate without it. I dare not go for it. She forbade me; and, indeed, I can't bear to leave her for anything; so I employed Poikilus to try and learn whether that lady has the money still, and whether she means to rob me of it, or not."

Fanny Dover reflected a moment, then delivered herself thus: "You were wrong to tell a fib about it. What you must do now, brazen it out. Tell her you love her, but have got your pride, and will not come into her family a pauper. Defy her, to be sure: we like to be defied now and then, when we are fond of the fellow."

"I will do it," said he: "but she shuns me. I can't get a word with her."

Fanny said she would try and manage that for him; and as the rest of their talk might not interest the reader, and certainly would not edify him, I pass on to the fact that she did, that very afternoon, go into Zoe's room, and tell her Severne was very unhappy: he had told a fib, but it was not intended to deceive her, and he wished to explain the whole thing.

"Did he explain it to you?" asked Zoe, rather sharply.

"No; but he said enough to make me think you are using him very hardly. To be sure, you have another string to your bow."

"Oh, that is the interpretation you put."

"It is the true one. Do you think you can make *me* believe you would have shied him so long if Lord Uxmoor had not been in the house?"

Zoe bridled, but made no reply, and Fanny went to her own room, laughing.

Zoe was much disturbed. She secretly longed to hear Severne justify himself. She could not forgive a lie, nor esteem a liar. She was one of those who could

pardon certain things in a woman she would not forgive in a man. Under a calm exterior, she had suffered a noble distress; but her pride would not let her show it. Yet now that he had appealed to her for a hearing, and Fanny knew he had appealed, she began to falter.

Still Fanny was not altogether wrong: the presence of a man incapable of a falsehood, and that man devoted to her, was a little damaging to Severne, though not so much as Miss Artful thought.

However, this very afternoon, Lord Uxmoor had told her he must leave Vizard Court to-morrow morning.

So Zoe said to herself, "I need not make opportunities; after to-morrow he will find plenty."

She had an instinctive fear he would tell more falsehoods, to cover those he had told; and then she should despise him, and they would both be miserable; for she felt, for a moment, a horrible dread that she might both love and despise the same person, if it was Edward Severne.

There were several people to dinner, and, as hostess, she managed not to think too much of either of her admirers.

However, a stolen glance showed her they were both out of spirits. She felt sorry. Her nature was very pitiful. She asked herself was it her fault; and did not quite acquit herself. Perhaps she ought to have been more open, and declared her sentiments. Yet would that have been modest in a lady who was not formally engaged? She was puzzled. She had no experience to guide her: only her high breeding and her virginal instincts.

She was glad when the night ended.

She caught herself wishing the next day was gone too.

When she retired Uxmoor was already gone, and Severne opened the door to her. He fixed his eyes on her so imploringly it made her heart melt; but she only blushed high, and went away sad and silent.

As her maid was undressing her she caught sight of a letter on her table. "What is that?" said she.

"It is a letter," said Rosa, very demurely.

Zoe divined that the girl had been asked to put it there.

Her bosom heaved, but she would not encourage such proceedings, nor let Rosa see how eager she was to hear those very excuses she had evaded.

But, for all that, Rosa knew she was going to read it, for she only had her gown taken off and a *peignoir* substituted, and her hair let down and brushed a little. Then she dismissed Rosa, locked the door, and pounced on the letter. It lay on her table with the seal uppermost. She turned it round: it was not from *him;* was from Lord Uxmoor.

She ran down and read it.

DEAR MISS VIZARD, — I have had no opportunities of telling you all I feel for you, without attracting an attention that might have been unpleasant to you; but I am sure you must have seen that I admired you at first sight. That was admiration of your beauty and grace, though even then you showed me a gentle heart and a sympathy that made me grateful. But now I have had the privilege of being under the same roof with you, it is admiration no longer — it is deep and ardent love, and I see that my happiness depends on you. Will you confide *your* happiness to me? I don't know that I could make you as proud and happy as I should be myself; but I should try very hard, out of gratitude as well as love. We have also certain sentiments in common. That would be one bond more.

But indeed I feel I cannot make my love a good bargain to you, for you are peerless, and deserve a much better lot in

every way than I can offer. I can only kneel to you and say, "Zoe Vizard, if your heart is your own to give, pray be my lover, my queen, my wife."

Your faithful servant and devoted admirer,

UXMOOR.

"Poor fellow!" said Zoe, and her eyes filled. She sat quite quiet, with the letter open in her hand.

She looked at it, and murmured, "A pearl is offered me here: wealth, title, all that some women sigh for; and — what I value above all — a noble nature, a true heart, and a soul above all meanness. No; Uxmoor will never tell a falsehood. He *could* not."

She sighed deeply, and closed her eyes. All was still. The light was faint; yet she closed her eyes, like a true woman, to see the future clearer.

Then, in the sober and deep calm, there seemed to be faint peeps of coming things: it appeared a troubled sea, and Uxmoor's strong hand stretched out to rescue her. If she married him she knew the worst, — an honest man she esteemed, and had almost an affection for — but no love.

As some have an impulse to fling themselves from a height, she had one to give herself to Uxmoor, quietly, irrevocably, by three written words despatched that night.

But it was only an impulse. If she had written it, she would have torn it up.

Presently a light thrill passed through her; she wore a sort of half furtive, guilty look, and opened the window.

Ay, there he stood in the moonlight, waiting to be heard.

She did not start, nor utter any exclamation. Somehow or other she almost *knew* he was there, before she opened the window.

"Well," said she, with a world of meaning.

"You grant me a hearing at last."

"I do. But it is no use. You cannot explain away a falsehood."

"Of course not. I am here to confess that I told a falsehood. But it was not you I wished to deceive. I was going to explain the whole thing to you and tell you all; but there is no getting a word with you since that lord came."

"He had nothing to do with it. I should have been just as much shocked."

"But it would only have been for five minutes. Zoe!"

"Well?"

"Just put yourself in my place. A detective, who ought to have written to me in reply to my note, surprises me with a call. I was ashamed that such a visitor should enter your brother's house to see me. There sat my rival — an aristocrat. I was surprised into disowning the unwelcome visitor, and calling him my solicitor."

Now, if Zoe had been an Old Bailey counsel she would have kept him to the point, reminded him that his visitor was unseen, and fixed a voluntary falsehood on him; but she was not an experienced cross-examiner, and perhaps she was at heart as indignant at the detective as at the falsehood: so she missed her advantage, and said, indignantly, "And what business had you with a detective? Your having one at all, and then calling him your solicitor, makes one think all manner of things."

"I should have told you all about it that afternoon; only our intercourse is broken off, to please a rival. Suppose I gave you a rival, and used you, for her sake, as you use me for his, what would you say? That would be a worse infidelity than sending for a detective, would it not?"

Zoe replied haughtily, "You have no right to say you have a rival — how dare you? Besides," said she, a little ruefully, "it is you who are on your defence, not me."

"True; I forgot that. Recrimination is not convenient, is it?"

"I can escape it by shutting the window," said Zoe, coldly.

"Oh, don't do that. Let me have the bliss of seeing you, and I will submit to a good deal of injustice without a murmur."

"The detective?" said Zoe, sternly.

"I sent for him, and gave him his instructions, and he has gone for me to Homburg."

"Ah! I thought so. What for?"

"About my money. To try and find out whether they mean to keep it."

"Would you really take it if they would give it you?"

"Of course I would."

"Yet you know my mind about it."

"I know you forbade me to go for it in person, and I obeyed you, did I not?"

"Yes, you did — at the time."

"I do now. You object to my going in person to Homburg. You know I was once acquainted with that lady, and you feel about her a little of what I feel about Lord Uxmoor; about a tenth part of what I feel, I suppose, and with not one-tenth so much reason. Well, I know what the pangs of jealousy are; I will never inflict them on you, as you have on me. But I *will* have my money, whether you like or not."

Zoe looked amazed at being defied. It was new to her. She drew up, but said nothing.

Severne went on: "And I will tell you why; because

without money I cannot have you. My circumstances have lately improved; with my money that lies in Homburg I can now clear my family estate of all incumbrance, and come to your brother for your hand. Oh, I shall be a very bad match even then, but I shall not be a pauper, nor a man in debt. I shall be one of your own class, as I was born — a small landed gentleman with an unencumbered estate."

"That is not the way to my affection. I do not care for money."

"But other people do. Dear Zoe, you have plenty of pride yourself; you must let me have a little. Deeply as I love you, I could not come to your brother and say, 'Give me your sister, and maintain us both.' No, Zoe, I cannot ask your hand till I have cleared my estate; and I cannot clear it without that money. For once I must resist you, and take my chance. There is wealth and a title offered you. I won't ask you to dismiss them and take a pauper. If you don't like me to try for my own money, give your hand to Lord Uxmoor; then I shall recall my detective, and let all go; for poverty or wealth will matter nothing to me; I shall have lost the angel I love; and she once loved me."

He faltered, and the sad cadence of his voice melted her. She began to cry. He turned his head away, and cried too.

There was a silence. Zoe broke it first.

"Edward," said she, softly.

"Zoe!"

"You need not defy me. I would not humiliate you for all the world. Will it comfort you to know that I have been very unhappy ever since you lowered yourself so? I will try and accept your explanation."

He clasped his hands with gratitude.

"Edward, will you grant me a favor?"

"Can you ask?"

"It is to have a little more confidence in one who — Now you must obey me implicitly, and perhaps we may both be happier to-morrow night than we are to-night. Directly after breakfast, take your hat, and walk to Hillstoke. You can call on Miss Gale, if you like; and say something civil."

"What! go and leave you alone with Lord Uxmoor?"

"Yes."

"Ah, Zoe! you know your power. Have a little mercy."

"Perhaps I may have a great deal, if you obey me."

"I *will* obey you."

"Then go to bed this minute."

She gave him a heavenly smile, and closed the window.

Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Ned Severne said, "Any messages for Hillstoke? I am going to walk up there this morning."

"Embrace my virago for me," said Vizard.

Severne begged to be excused.

He hurried off, and Lord Uxmoor felt a certain relief.

The master of arts asked himself what he could do to propitiate the female M.D. He went to the gardener and got him to cut a huge bouquet, choice and fragrant, and he carried it all the way to Hillstoke. Miss Gale was at home. As he was introduced rather suddenly, she started and changed color, and said, sharply, "What do you want?" Never asked him to sit down, rude thing.

He stood hanging his head like a culprit, and said, with well-feigned timidity, that he came by desire of Miss Vizard, to inquire how she was getting on, and to hope the people were beginning to appreciate her.

"Oh! that alters the case; any messenger from Miss

Vizard is welcome. Did she send me these flowers, too? They are beautiful."

"No; I gathered them myself. I have always understood ladies love flowers."

"It is only by report you know that, eh? Let me add something to your information; a good deal depends on the giver; and you may fling these out of the window." She tossed them to him.

The master of arts gave a humble, patient sigh, and threw the flowers out of the window, which was open. He then sank into a chair, and hid his face in his hands.

Miss Gale colored, and bit her lip. She did not think he would have done that, and it vexed her economical soul. She cast a piercing glance at him, then resumed her studies, and ignored his presence.

But his patience exhausted hers. He sat there twenty minutes, at least, in a state of collapse that bade fair to last forever.

So presently she looked up, and affected to start. "What! are you there still?" said she.

"Yes," said he; "you did not dismiss me — only my poor flowers."

"Well," said she, apologetically, "the truth is, I'm not strong enough to dismiss you by the same road."

"It is not necessary. You have only to say 'Go.'"

"Oh, that would be rude. Could not you go without being told right out?"

"No, I could not. Miss Gale, I can't account for it, but there is some strange attraction. You hate me, and I fear you, yet I could follow you about like a dog; let me sit here a little longer, and see you work."

Miss Gale leaned her head upon her hand, and contemplated him at great length. Finally she adopted a catlike course. "No," said she at last; "I am going my rounds; you can come with me, if I am so attractive."

He said he should be proud, and she put on her hat in thirty seconds.

They walked together in silence. He felt as if he was promenading a tiger-cat, that might stop any moment to fall upon him.

She walked him into a cottage; there was a little dead wood burning on that portion of the brick floor called the hearth. A pale old man sat close to the fire, in a wooden arm-chair. She felt his pulse, and wrote him a prescription: —

To Mr. Vizard's housekeeper, Vizard Court.

Please give the bearer two pounds of good roast-beef, or mutton, not salted, and one pint port wine.

RHODA GALE, M.D.

"Here, Jenny," she said, to a sharp little girl, the man's grand-niece, "take this down to Vizard Court, and, if the housekeeper objects, go to the front door, and demand, in my name, to see the squire or Miss Vizard, and give *them* the paper. Don't you give it up without the meat. Take this basket on your arm."

Then she walked out of the cottage, and Severne followed her; he ventured to say that was a novel prescription.

She explained. "Physicians are obliged to send the rich to the chemist, or else the fools would think they were slighted. But we need not be so nice with the poor; we can prescribe to do them good. When you inflicted your company on me, I was sketching out a treatise, to be entitled 'Cure of Disorders by Esculents.' That old man is nearly *exsanguis*. There is not a drug in creation that could do him an atom of good. Nourishing food may. If not, why he is booked for the long journey! Well, he has had his innings. He is fourscore. Do you think *you* will ever see fourscore, you and your vices?"

"Oh, no. But I think *you* will, and I hope so; for you go about doing good."

"And some people one could name go about doing mischief."

Severne made no reply.

Soon after they discovered a little group, principally women and children. These were inspecting something on the ground, and chattering excitedly. The words of dire import, "She have possessed him with a devil," struck their ear. But soon they caught sight of Miss Gale, and were dead silent. She said, "What is the matter? Oh, I see; the vermifuge has acted."

It was so; a putty-faced boy had been unable to eat his breakfast; had suffered malaise for hours afterwards, and at last had been seized with nausea, and had restored to the world they so adorn a number of amphibia, which now, to judge by their movements, bitterly regretted the reckless impatience with which they had fled from an unpleasant medicine to a cold-hearted world.

"Well, good people," said Miss Gale, "what are you making a fuss about? Are they better in the boy, or out of him?"

The women could not find their candor at a moment's notice, but old Giles replied heartily, "Why, hout! better an empty house than a bad tenant."

"That is true," said half a dozen voices at once. They could resist common-sense in its liquid form, but not when solidified into a proverb.

"Catch me the boy," said Miss Gale, severely.

Habitual culpability destroys self-confidence; so the boy suspected himself of crime, and instantly took to flight. His companions loved hunting; so three swifter boys followed him with a cheerful yell, secured him, and brought him up for sentence.

"Don't be frightened, Jacob," said the doctress;

"I only want to know whether you feel better or worse."

His mother put in her word. "He was ever so bad all the morning."

"Hold your jaw," said old Giles, "and let the boy tell his own tale."

"Well, then," said Jacob, "I was mortal bad, but now I do feel like a feather; wust on't is, I be so blessed hungry now. Dall'd if I couldn't eat the devil — stuffed with thunder and lightning."

"I'll prescribe accordingly," said Miss Gale, and wrote in pencil an order on a beef-steak pie they had sent her from the Court.

The boy's companions put their heads together over this order, and offered their services to escort him.

"No, thank you," said the doctress; "he will go alone, you young monkeys. Your turn will come."

Then she proceeded on her rounds, with Mr. Severne at her heels, until it was past one o'clock.

Then she turned round and faced him. "We will part here," said she, "and I will explain my conduct to you, as you seem in the dark. I have been co-operating with Miss Vizard all this time. I reckon she sent you out of the way to give Lord Uxmoor his opportunity, so I have detained you. Whilst you have been studying medicine, he has been popping the question, of course. Good-by, Mr. Villain."

Her words went through the man like cold steel. It was one woman reading another. He turned very white, and put his hand to his heart. But he recovered himself, and said, "If she prefers another to me, I must submit. It is not my absence for a few hours that will make the difference. You cannot make me regret the hours I have passed in your company. Good-by;" and he seemed to leave her very reluctantly.

"One word," said she, softening a little. "I'm not proof against your charm. Unless I see Zoe Vizard in danger, you have nothing to fear from me. But I love *her*, you understand."

He returned to her directly, and said, in most earnest, supplicating tones, "But will you ever forgive me?"

"I will try."

And so they parted.

He went home at a great rate; for Miss Gale's insinuations had raised some fear in his breast.

Meantime this is what had really passed between Zoe and Lord Uxmoor. Vizard went to his study, and Fanny retired at a signal from Zoe. She rose, but did not go; she walked slowly towards the window: Uxmoor joined her; for he saw he was to have his answer from her mouth.

Her bosom heaved a little, and her cheek flushed. "Lord Uxmoor," she said, "you have done me the greatest honor any man can pay a woman, and from you it is indeed an honor. I could not write such an answer as I could wish; and, besides, I wish to spare you all the mortification I can."

"Ah!" said Uxmoor, piteously.

"You are worthy of any lady's love; but I have only my esteem to give you, and that was given long ago."

Uxmoor, who had been gradually turning very white, faltered, "I had my fears. Good by."

She gave him her hand. He put it respectfully to his lips; then turned and left her, sick at heart, but too brave to let it be seen. He preferred her esteem to her pity.

By this means he got both. She put her handkerchief to her eyes without disguise. But he only turned at the door to say, in a pretty firm voice, "God bless you!"

In less than an hour he drove his team from the door, sitting heart-broken and desolate, but firm and unflinching as a rock.

So then, on his return from Hillstoke, Severne found them all at luncheon except Uxmoor. He detailed his visit to Miss Gale, and, whilst he talked, observed. Zoe was beaming with love and kindness. He felt sure she had not deceived him. He learned, by merely listening, that Lord Uxmoor was gone, and he exulted inwardly.

After luncheon, elysium. He walked with the two girls, and Fanny lagged behind; and Zoe proved herself no coquette. A coquette would have been a little cross, and shown him she had made a sacrifice. Not so Zoe Vizard. She never told him, nor even Fanny, she had refused Lord Uxmoor. She esteemed the great sacrifice she had made for him as a little one, and so loved him a little more, that he had cost her an earl's coronet and a large fortune.

The party resumed their habits that Uxmoor had interrupted; and no warning voice was raised.

The boring commenced at Hillstoke, and Doctres Gale hovered over the work. The various strata and their fossil deposits were an endless study, and kept her microscope employed. With this, and her treatise on "Cure by Esculents," she was so employed that she did not visit the Court for some days: then came an invitation from Lord Uxmoor to stay a week with him, and inspect his village. She accepted it, and drove herself in the bailiff's gig, all alone. She found her host attending to his duties, but dejected; so then she suspected, and turned the conversation to Zoe Vizard, and soon satisfied herself he had no hopes in that quarter. Yet he spoke of her with undisguised and tender admiration. Then she said to herself, "This is a man, and he shall have her."

She sat down and wrote a letter to Vizard, telling him all she knew, and what she thought — viz., that another woman, and a respectable one, had a claim on Mr. Severne, which ought to be closely inquired into, *and the lady's version heard.* "Think of it," said she. "He disowned the woman who had saved his life, he was so afraid I should tell Miss Vizard under what circumstances I first saw him."

She folded and addressed the letter.

But, having relieved her mind, in some degree, by this, she asked herself whether it would not be kinder to all parties to try and save Zoe without an exposure. Probably Severne benefited by his grace and his disarming qualities; for her ultimate resolution was to give him a chance — offer him an alternative: he must either quietly retire, or be openly exposed.

So then she put the letter in her desk, made out her visit, of which no further particulars can be given at present, returned home, and walked down to the Court next morning, to have it out with Edward Severne.

But unfortunately, from the very day she offered him terms up to Hillstoke, the tide began to run in Severne's favor with great rapidity.

A letter came from the detective. Severne received it at breakfast, and laid it before Zoe, which had a favorable effect on her mind to begin.

Poikilus reported that the money was in good hands. He had seen the lady. She made no secret of the thing: the sum was forty-nine hundred pounds, and she said half belonged to her and half to a gentleman. She did not know him, but her agent, Ashmead, did. Poikilus added that he had asked her would she honor that gentleman's draft? She had replied she should be afraid to do that; but Mr. Ashmead should hand it to him on

demand. Poikilus summed up that the lady was evidently respectable, and the whole thing square.

Severne posted this letter to his cousin, under cover, to show him he was really going to clear his estate; but begged him to return it immediately, and lend him fifty pounds. The accommodating cousin sent him fifty pounds, to aid him in wooing his heiress. He bought her a hoop-ring, apologized for its small value, and expressed his regret that all he could offer her was on as small a scale, except his love.

She blushed and smiled on him, like heaven opening. "Small and great, I take them," said she, and her lovely head rested on his shoulder.

They were engaged.

From that hour he could command a *tête-à-tête* with her whenever he chose, and his infernal passion began to suggest all manner of wild, wicked, and unreasonable hopes.

Meantime there was no stopping. He soon found he must speak seriously to Vizard. He went into his study, and began to open the subject. Vizard stopped him. "Fetch the other culprit," said he; and when Zoe came, blushing, he said, "Now I am going to make shorter work of this than you have done. Zoe has ten thousand pounds. What have you got?"

"Only a small estate, worth eight thousand pounds, that I hope to clear of all incumbrances, if I can get my money."

"Fond of each other? — Well, don't strike me dead with your eyes. I have watched you, and, I own, a prettier pair of turtle-doves I never saw. Well, you have got love, and I have got money. I'll take care of you both. But you must live with me. I promise never to marry."

This brought Zoe round his neck, with tears and kisses

of pure affection. He returned them and parted her hair paternally.

"This is a beautiful world, isn't it?" said he, with more tenderness than cynicism this time.

"Ah, that it is!" said Zoe, earnestly. "But I can't have you say you will never be as happy as I am. There are true hearts in this heavenly world; for I have found one."

"I have not, and don't mean to try again. I am going in for the paternal now. You two are my children. I have a talisman to keep me from marrying. I'll show it you." He drew a photograph from his drawer, set round with gold and pearls. He showed it them suddenly. They both started. A fine photograph of Ina Klosking. She was dressed as plainly as at the gambling-table; but without a bonnet, and only one rose in her hair. Her noble forehead was shown, and her face a model of intelligence, womanliness, and serene dignity.

He gazed at it, and they at him and it.

He kissed it. "Here is my fate," said he. "Now mark the ingenuity of a parent. I keep out of my fate's way. But I use her to keep off any other little fates that may be about. No other humbug can ever catch me while I have such a noble humbug as this to contemplate. Ah! and here she is as Siebel. What a goddess! just look at her! Adorable! There, this shall stand upon my table, and the other shall be hung in my bedroom. Then, my dear Zoe, you will be safe from a stepmother, for I am your father now. Please understand that."

This brought poor Zoe round his neck again with such an effusion, that at last he handed her to Severne, and he led her from the room, quite overcome, and, to avoid all conversation about what had just passed, gave her over to Fanny, whilst he retired to compose himself.

By dinner-time he was as happy as a prince again, and relieved of all compunction.

He heard afterwards, from Fanny, that Zoe and she had discussed the incident, and Vizard's infatuation, Fanny being especially wroth at Vizard's abuse of pearls; but she told him she had advised Zoe not to mention that lady's name, but let her die out.

And, in point of fact, Zoe did avoid the subject.

There came an eventful day. Vizard got a letter, at breakfast, from his banker's, that made him stare, and then knit his brows. It was about Edward Severne's acceptances. He said nothing, but ordered his horse, and rode into Taddington.

The day was keen, but sunny; and, seeing him afoot so early, Zoe said she should like a drive before luncheon. She would show Severne and Fanny some ruins on Pagnell Hill. They could leave the trap at the village inn, and walk up the hill. Fanny begged off, and Severne was very glad. The prospect of a long walk up a hill with Zoe, and then a day spent in utter seclusion with her, fired his imagination, and made his heart beat. Here was one of the opportunities he had long sighed for, of making passionate love to innocence and inexperience.

Zoe herself was eager for the drive, and came down, followed by Rosa with some wraps, and waited in the morning-room for the dog-cart. It was behind time for once, because the careful coachman had insisted on the axle being oiled. At last the sound of wheels was heard. A carriage drew up at the door.

"Tell Mr. Severne," said Zoe. "He is in the dining-room, I think."

But it was not the dog-cart.

A vigilant footman came hastily out, and opened the

hall-door. A lady was on the steps, and spoke to him, but, in speaking, she caught sight of Zoe in the hall. She instantly slipped past the man, and stood within the great door.

"Miss Vizard?" said she.

Zoe took a step towards her, and said, with astonishment, "Mademoiselle Klosking!"

The ladies looked at each other; and Zoe saw something strange was coming, for the Klosking was very pale, yet firm, and fixed her eyes upon her as if there was nothing else in sight.

"You have a visitor — Mr. Severne?"

"Yes," said Zoe, drawing up.

"Can I speak with him?"

"He will answer for himself. EDWARD!"

At her call Severne came out hastily behind Ina Klosking.

She turned, and they faced each other.

"Ah!" she cried; and, in spite of all, there was more of joy than any other passion in the exclamation.

Not so he. He uttered a scream of dismay, and staggered, white as a ghost, but still glared at Ina Klosking.

Zoe's voice fell on him like a clap of thunder: "What! — Edward! — Mr. Severne — has this lady still any right" —

"No, none whatever!" he cried; "it is all past and gone."

"What is past?" said Ina Klosking, grandly. "Are you out of your senses?"

Then she was close to him in a moment, by one grand movement, and took him by both lapels of his coat, and held him firmly. "Speak before this lady," she cried. "Have — I — no — rights — over you?" and her voice was majestic, and her Danish eyes gleamed lightning.

The wretch's knees gave way a moment, and he shook

in her hands. Then, suddenly, he turned wild. "Fiend! you have ruined me!" he yelled; and then, with his natural strength, which was great, and the superhuman power of mad excitement, he whirled her right round, and flung her from him, and dashed out of the door, uttering cries of rage and despair.

The unfortunate lady, thus taken by surprise, fell heavily, and, by cruel ill-luck, struck her temple, in falling, against the sharp corner of a marble table. It gashed her forehead fearfully, and she lay senseless, with the blood spurting in jets from her white temple.

Zoe screamed violently; and the hall and the hall-staircase seemed to fill by magic.

In the terror and confusion, Harrington Vizard strode into the hall, from Taddington. "What is the matter?" he cried; "a woman killed?"

Some one cried out she had fallen.

"Water, fools! a sponge! don't stand gaping!" and he flung himself on his knees, and raised the woman's head from the floor. One eager look into her white face — one wild cry — "Great God! — it is" — He had recognized her.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was piteous to see, and hear. The blood would not stop; it spurted no longer, but flowed alarmingly. Vizard sent Harris off in his own fly for a doctor, to save time. He called for ice. He cried out in agony to his servants, "Can none of you think of anything? There — that hat. Here, you women! tear me the nap off with your fingers. My God! — what is to be done? She'll bleed to death." And he held her to his breast, and almost moaned with pity over her, as he pressed the cold sponge to her wound — in vain; for still the red blood would flow.

Wheels ground the gravel. Servants flew to the door, crying, "The doctor! the doctor!"

As if he could have been fetched in five minutes from three miles off.

Yet it was a doctor. Harris had met Miss Gale walking quietly down from Hillstoke. He had told her in a few hurried words, and brought her as fast as the horses could go.

She glided in swiftly, keen, but self-possessed, and took it all in directly.

Vizard saw her, and cried, "Ah! help! — she is bleeding to death!"

"She shall not," said Rhoda. Then to one footman, "Bring a footstool, *you*;" to another, "*You* bring me a cork;" to Vizard, "*You* hold her towards me so. Now sponge the wound."

This done, she pinched the lips of the wound together with her neat strong fingers. "See what I do," she said

to Vizard. "You will have to do it whilst I — ah, the stool! Now lay her head on that; the other side, man. Now, sir, compress the wound as I did, vigorously. Hold the cork, *you*, till I want it."

She took out of her pocket some adhesive plaster, and flakes of some strong styptic, and a piece of elastic. "Now," said she, to Vizard, "give me a little opening in the middle to plaster these strips across the wound." He did so. Then in a moment she passed the elastic under the sufferer's head, drew it over with the styptic between her finger and thumb, and crack; the styptic was tight on the compressed wound; she forced in more styptic, increasing the pressure, then she whipped out a sort of surgical housewife, and with some cutting instrument reduced the cork, then cut it convex, and fastened it on the styptic by another elastic. There was no flutter, yet it was all done in fifty seconds.

"There," said she, "she will bleed no more to speak of. Now, seat her upright— Why! I have seen her before. This is — sir, you can send the men away."

"Yes; and, Harris, pack up Mr. Severne's things, and bring them down here this moment."

The male servants retired, the women hell aloof. Fanny Dover came forward, pale and trembling, and helped to place Ina Klosking in the hall porter's chair. She was insensible still, but moaned faintly.

Her moans were echoed: all eyes turned. It was Zoe, seated apart, all bowed and broken — ghastly pale, and glaring straight before her.

"Poor girl!" said Vizard. "We forgot her. It is her heart that bleeds. Where is the scoundrel, that I may kill him?" and he rushed out at the door to look for him. The man's life would not have been worth much, if Squire Vizard could have found him then.

But he soon came back to his wretched home, and eyed

the dismal scene, and the havoc one man had made: the marble floor all stained with blood; Ina Klosking supported in a chair, white, and faintly moaning; Zoe still crushed, and glaring at vacancy, and Fanny sobbing round her with pity and terror; for she knew there must be worse to come than this wild stupor.

"Take her to her room, Fanny dear," said Vizard, in a hurried, faltering voice; "and don't leave her. Rosa, help Miss Dover. Do not leave her alone, night nor day." Then to Miss Gale, "She will live? Tell me she will live."

"I hope so," said Rhoda Gale. "Oh! the blow will not kill her; nor yet the loss of blood. But I fear there will be distress of mind added to the bodily shock. And such a noble face! My own heart bleeds for her. Oh, sir! do not send her away to strangers. Let me take her up to the farm. It is nursing she will need, and tact, when she comes to herself."

"Send her away to strangers!" cried Vizard. "Never! No, not even to the farm. Here she received her wound; here all that you and I can do shall be done to save her. Ah, here's Harris with the villain's things. Get the lady's boxes out, and put Mr. Severne's into the fly. Give the man two guineas, and let him leave them at the 'Swan,' in Taddington."

He then beckoned down the women, and had Ina Klosking carried up-stairs to the very room Severne had occupied.

He then convened the servants, and placed them formally under Miss Gale's orders; and one female servant having made a remark, he turned her out of the house neck and crop directly with her month's wages. The others had to help her pack, only half an hour being allowed for her exit.

The house seemed all changed. Could this be Vizard

Court? Dead gloom — hurried whispers — and everybody walking softly, and scared — none knowing what might be the next calamity.

Vizard felt sick at heart and helpless. He had done all he could, and was reduced to that condition women bear far better than men, — he must wait, and hope, and fear. He walked up and down the carpeted landing, racked with anxiety.

At last there came a single scream of agony from Ina Klosking's room.

It made the strong man quake.

He tapped softly at the door.

Rhoda opened it.

"What is it?" he faltered.

She replied, gravely, "Only what must be. She is beginning to realize what has befallen her. Don't come here; you can do no good. I will run down to you, whenever I dare. Give me a nurse to help this first night."

He went down, and sent into the village for a woman who bore a great name for nursing. Then he wandered about, disconsolate.

The leaden hours passed. He went to dress, and discovered Ina Klosking's blood upon his clothes. It shocked him first, and then it melted him: he felt an inexpressible tenderness at sight of it. The blood that had flowed in her veins seemed sacred to him. He folded that suit, and tied it up in a silk handkerchief, and locked it away.

In due course he sat down to dinner; we are all such creatures of habit. There was everything as usual, except the familiar faces. There was the glittering plate on the polished sideboard, the pyramid of flowers surrounded with fruits. There were even chairs at the table, for the servants did not know he was to be quite

alone. But he was. One delicate dish after another was brought him, and sent away untasted. Soon after dinner, Rhoda Gale came down, and told him her patient was in a precarious condition; and she feared fever and delirium. She begged him to send one servant up to the farm for certain medicaments she had there, and another to the chemist at Taddington. These were despatched on swift horses; and both were back in half an hour.

By and by Fanny Dover came down to him with red eyes, and brought him Zoe's love. "But," said she, "don't ask her to come down. She is ashamed to look anybody in the face, poor girl."

"Why? what has *she* done?"

"O Harrington! she has made no secret of her affection; and now, at sight of that woman, he has abandoned her."

"Tell her I love her more than I ever did, and respect her more. Where is her pride?"

"Pride! she is full of it; and it will help her, by and by. But she has a bitter time to go through first. You don't know how she loves him."

"What! love him still, after what he has done?"

"Yes. She interprets it this way and that. She cannot bear to believe another woman has any real right to separate them."

"Separate them! The scoundrel knocked *her* down for loving him still, and fled from them both. Was ever guilt more clear? If she doubts that he is a villain, tell her from me that he is a forger, and has given me bills with false names on them. The bankers gave me notice to-day, and I was coming home to order him out of the house, when this miserable business happened."

"A forger! is it possible?" said Fanny. "But it is no use my telling her that sort of thing. If he had committed murder, and was true to her, she would cling

to him. She never knew till now how she loved him, nor I either. She put him in Coventry for telling a lie; but she was far more unhappy all the time than he was. There is nothing to do but to be kind to her, and let her hide her face. Don't hurry her."

"Not I. God help her! If she has a wish, it shall be gratified. I am powerless. She is young. Surely, time will cure her of a villain, now he is detected."

Fanny said she hoped so.

The truth is, Zoe had not opened her heart to Fanny: she clung to her, and writhed in her arms; but she spoke little; and one broken sentence contradicted the other. But mental agony, like bodily, finds its vent, not in speech, the brain's great interpreter, but in inarticulate cries and moans and sighs that prove us animals even in the throes of mind. Zoe was in that cruel state of suffering.

So passed that miserable day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Ina Klosking recovered her senses that evening, and asked Miss Gale where she was. Miss Gale told her she was in the house of a friend.

"What friend?"

"That," said Miss Gale, "I will tell you by and by. You are in good hands, and I am your physician."

"I have heard your voice before," said Ina; "but I know not where, and it is so dark. Why is it so dark?"

"Because too much light is not good for you. You have met with an accident."

"What accident, madam?"

"You fell, and hurt your poor forehead. See, I have bandaged it, and now you must let me wet the bandage — to keep your brow cool."

"Thank you, madam," said Ina, in her own sweet but queenly way; "you are very good to me. I wish I could see your face more clearly. I know your voice." Then, after a silence, during which Miss Gale eyed her with anxiety, she said, like one groping her way to the truth, "I — fell — and — hurt — my — forehead? — *Ah!*"

Then it was she uttered the cry that made Vizard quake at the door, and shook, for a moment, even Rhoda's nerves, though, as a rule, they were iron in a situation of this kind.

It had all come back to Ina Klosking.

After that piteous cry, she never said a word. She did nothing but think, and put her hand to her head.

And soon after midnight she began to talk incoherently.

The physician could only proceed by physical means. She attacked the coming fever at once, with the remedies of the day, and also with an infusion of monk's-hood. That poison, promptly administered, did not deceive her. She obtained a slight perspiration, which was so much gained in the battle.

In the morning she got the patient shifted into another bed, and she slept a little after that. But soon she was awake, restless, and raving: still her character pervaded her delirium. No violence. Nothing any sore-injured woman need be ashamed to have said: only it was all disconnected. One moment she was speaking to the leader of the orchestra — at another to Mr. Ashmead — at another, with divine tenderness, to her still faithful Severne. And though not hurried, as usual in these cases, it was almost incessant and pitiable to hear, each observation was so wise and good, yet, all being disconnected, the hearer could not but feel that a noble mind lay before him, overthrown and broken into fragments like some Attic column.

In the middle of this the handle was softly turned, and Zoe Vizard came in pale and sombre.

Long before this, she had said to Fanny, several times, "I ought to go and see her;" and Fanny had said, "Of course you ought."

So now she came. She folded her arms, and stood at the foot of the bed, and looked at her unhappy rival, unhappy as possible herself.

What contrary feelings fought in that young breast! Pity and hatred. She must hate the rival who had come between her and him she loved; she must pity the woman who lay there, pale, wounded, and little likely to recover.

And with all this, a great desire to know whether this sufferer had any right to come and seize Edward Severne

by the arm, and so draw down calamity on both the women who loved him.

She looked and listened, and Rhoda Gale thought it hard upon her patient.

But it was not in human nature the girl should do otherwise: so Rhoda said nothing.

What fell from Ina's lips was not of a kind to make Zoe more her friend.

Her mind seemed now like a bird tied by a long silken thread. It made large excursions, but constantly came back to her love. Sometimes that love was happy, sometimes unhappy. Often she said "Edward" in the exquisite tone of a loving woman; and, whenever she did, Zoe received it with a sort of shiver, as if a dagger, fine as a needle, had passed through her whole body.

At last, after telling some tenor that he had sung F natural instead of F sharp, and praised somebody's rendering of a song in *Il flauto magico*, and told Ashmead to make no more engagements for her at present, for she was going to Vizard Court, the poor soul paused a minute, and uttered a deep moan.

"*Struck down by the very hand that was vowed to protect me!*" said she. Then was silent again. Then began to cry, and sob, and wring her hands.

Zoe put her hand to her heart, and moved feebly towards the door. However, she stopped a moment to say, "I am no use here. You would soon have me raving in the next bed. I will send Fanny." Then she drew herself up. "Miss Gale, everybody here is at your command. Pray spare nothing you can think of to save — *my brother's guest.*"

There came out the bitter drop.

When she had said that, she stalked from the room like some red Indian bearing a mortal arrow in him, but too proud to show it.

But when she got to her own room, she flung herself on her sofa, and writhed and sobbed in agony.

Fanny Dover came in and found her so, and flew to her.

But she ordered her out quite wildly. "No, no; go to *her*, like all the rest, and leave poor Zoe all alone. She *is* alone."

Then Fanny clung to her, and tried hard to comfort her.

This young lady now became very zealous and active. She divided her time between the two sufferers, and was indefatigable in their service. When she was not supporting Zoe, she was always at Miss Gale's elbow offering her services. "Do let me help you," she said; "do pray let me help. We are poor at home, and there is nothing I cannot do. I'm worth any three servants."

She always helped shift the patient into a fresh bed, and that was done very often. She would run to the cook or the butler for anything that was wanted in a hurry. She flung gentility and humbug to the winds. Then she dressed in ten minutes, and went and dined with Vizard, and made excuses for Zoe's absence, to keep everything smooth: and finally, she insisted on sitting up with Ina Klosking till three in the morning, and made Miss Gale go to bed in the room. "Paid nurses!" said she; "they are no use except to snore, and drink the patient's wine. You and I will watch her every moment of the night; and if I'm ever at a loss what to do, I will call you."

Miss Gale stared at her once, and then accepted this new phase of her character.

The fever was hot while it lasted; but it was so encountered with tonics, and port wine, and strong beef-soup — not your rubbishy beef-tea — that in forty-eight hours it began to abate. Ina recognized Rhoda Gale as the lady

who had saved Severne's life at Montpellier, and wept long and silently upon her neck. In due course, Zoe, hearing there was a great change, came in again to look at her. She stood and eyed her. Soon Ina Klosking caught sight of her, and stared at her.

"You here!" said she. "Ah! you are Miss Vizard. I am in your house. I will get up and leave it;" and she made a feeble attempt to rise, but fell back, and the tears welled out of her eyes at her helplessness.

Zoe was indignant, but for the moment more shocked than anything else. She moved away a little, and did not know what to say.

"Let me look at you," said the patient. "Ah! you are beautiful. When I saw you at the theatre you fascinated me; how much more a man? I will resist no more. You are too beautiful to be resisted. Take him, and let me die."

"I do her no good," said Zoe, half sullenly, half trembling.

"Indeed you do not," said Rhoda, bluntly, and almost bitterly. She was all nurse.

"I'll come here no more," said Zoe, sadly, but sternly, and left the room.

Then Ina turned to Miss Gale and said, patiently, "I hope I was not rude to that lady — who has broken my heart."

Fanny and Rhoda took each a hand, and told her she could not be rude to anybody.

"My friends," said Ina, looking piteously at each in turn, "it is her house, you know, and she is very good to me now — after breaking my heart."

Then Fanny showed a deal of tact. "*Her* house!" said she; "it is no more hers than mine. Why, this house belongs to a gentleman, and he is mad after music. He knows you very well, though you don't know him, and he thinks you the first singer in Europe."

"You flatter me," said Ina sadly.

"Well, he thinks so; and he is reckoned a very good judge. Ah! now I think of it, I will show you something, and then you will believe me."

She ran off to the library, snatched up Ina's picture, set round with pearls, and came panting in with it. "There," said she; "now, you look at that!" and she put it before her eyes. "Now, who is that, if you please?"

"Oh! it is Ina Klosking that was. Please bring me a glass."

The two ladies looked at each other. Miss Gale made a negative signal, and Fanny said, "By and by. This will do instead, for it is as like as two peas. Now, ask yourself how this comes to be in the house, and set in pearls. Why, they are worth three hundred pounds. I assure you that the master of this house is *fanatico per la musica;* heard you sing Siebel at Homburg — raved about you — wanted to call on you; we had to drag him away from the place; and he declares you are the first singer in the world; and you cannot doubt his sincerity, for *here are the pearls.*"

Ina Klosking's pale cheek colored, and then she opened her two arms wide, and put them round Fanny's neck and kissed her. Her innocent vanity was gratified, and her gracious nature suggested gratitude to her who had brought her the compliment, instead of the usual ungrateful bumptiousness praise elicits from vanity.

Then Miss Gale put in her word — "When you met with this unfortunate accident, I was for taking you up to my house. It is three miles off; but he would not hear of it. He said, 'No; here she got her wound, and here she must be cured.'"

"So," said Fanny, "pray set your mind at ease. My cousin Harrington is a very good soul, but rather arbi-

trary. If you want to leave this place, you must get thoroughly well and strong; for he will never let you go till you are."

Between these two ladies, clever and co-operating, Ina smiled, and seemed relieved; but she was too weak to converse any more just then.

Some hours afterwards she beckoned Fanny to her, and said, "The master of the house — what is his name?"

"Harrington Vizard."

"What! *her* father!"

"La, no; only her half-brother."

"If he is so kind to me because I sing, why comes he not to see me? *She* has come."

Fanny smiled. "It is plain you are not an Englishwoman, though you speak it so beautifully. An English gentleman does not intrude into a lady's room."

"It is his room."

"He would say that whilst you occupy it, it is yours, and not his."

"He awaits my invitation then?"

"I dare say he would come if you were to invite him, but certainly not without."

"I wish to see him who has been so kind to me, and so loves music; but not to-day — I feel unable."

The next day she asked for a glass, and was distressed at her appearance. She begged for a cap.

"What kind of cap?" asked Fanny.

"One like that," said she, pointing to a portrait on the wall. It was of a lady in a plain brown silk dress, and a little white shawl, and a neat cap with a narrow lace border all round her face.

This particular cap was out of date full sixty years; but the house had a storeroom of relics, and Fanny, with Vizard's help, soon rummaged out a cap of the sort, with a narrow frill all round.

Her hair was smoothed, a white silk band passed over the now closed wound, and the cap fitted on her. She looked pale but angelic.

Fanny went down to Vizard, and invited him to come and see Mademoiselle Klosking—by her desire. "But," she added, "Miss Gale is very anxious, lest you should get talking of Severne. She says the fever and loss of blood have weakened her terribly; and if we bring the fever on again, she cannot answer for her life."

"Has she spoken of him to you?"

"Not once."

"Then why should she to me?"

"Because you are a man, and she may think to get the *truth* out of you; she knows *we* shall only say what is for the best. She is very deep, and we don't know her mind yet."

Vizard said he would be as guarded as he could; but if they saw him going wrong, they must send him away.

"Oh, Miss Gale will do that, you may be sure," said Fanny.

Thus prepared, Vizard followed Fanny up the stairs to the sick-room.

Either there is such a thing as love at first sight, or it is something more than first sight when an observant man gazes at a woman for an hour in a blaze of light, and drinks in her looks, her walk, her voice, and all the outward signs of a beautiful soul; for the stout cynic's heart beat at entering that room, as it had not beat for years. To be sure he had not only seen her on the stage in all her glory, but had held her, pale and bleeding, to his manly breast, and his heart warmed to her all the more, and, indeed, fairly melted with tenderness.

Fanny went in and announced him. He followed softly, and looked at her.

Wealth can make even a sickroom pretty.

The Klosking lay on snowy pillows whose glossy damask was edged with lace, and upon her form was an eider-down quilt covered with violet-colored satin, and her face was set in that sweet cap which hid her wound, and made her eloquent face less ghastly.

She turned to look at him, and he gazed at her in a way that spoke volumes.

"A seat," said she softly.

Fanny was for putting one close to her.

"No," said Miss Gale, "lower down; then she need not turn her head."

So he sat down nearer her feet.

"My good host," said she in her mellow voice, that retained its quality but not its power, "I desire to thank you for your goodness to a poor singer, struck down — by the hand that was bound to protect her."

Vizard faltered out that there was nothing to thank him for. He was proud to have her under his roof, thongh deeply grieved at the cause.

She looked at him, and her two nurses looked at her, and at each other, as much as to say, "She is going upon dangerous ground."

They were right. But she had not the courage; or, perhaps — as most women are a little cat-like in this, that they go away once or twice from the subject nearest their heart, before they turn and pounce on it — she must speak of other things first. Said she, "But, if I was unfortunate in that, I was fortunate in this, that I fell into good hands. These ladies are sisters to me," and she gave Miss Gale her hand, and kissed the other hand to Fanny, though she could scarcely lift it; "and I have a host who loves music, and overrates my poor ability." Then after a pause, "What have you heard me sing?"

"Siebel."

"Only Siebel! why, that is a poor little thing."

"So *I* thought, till I heard you sing it."

"And, after Siebel, you bought my photograph."

"Instantly."

"And wasted pearls on it."

"No, madam; I wasted it on pearls."

"If I were well, I should call that extravagant. But it is permitted to flatter the sick. It is kind. Me you overrate, I fear; but you do well to honor music. Ay, I, who lie here wounded and broken-hearted, do thank God for music. Our bodies are soon crushed; our loves decay, or turn to hate; but art is immortal."

She could no longer roll this out in her grand contralto; but she could still raise her eyes with enthusiasm, and her pale face was illuminated. A grand soul shone through her, though she was pale, weak, and prostrate.

They admired her in silence.

After a while she resumed, and said, "If I live, I must live for my art alone."

Miss Gale saw her approaching a dangerous topic; so she said hastily, "Don't say *if* you live, please, because that is arranged. You have been out of danger this twenty-four hours, provided you do not relapse; and I must take care of that."

"My kind friend," said Ina, "I shall not relapse; only my weakness is pitiable. Sometimes I can scarcely forbear crying, I feel so weak. When shall I be stronger?"

"You shall be a little stronger every three days. There are always ups and downs in convalescence."

"When shall I be strong enough to move?"

"Let me answer that question," said Vizard. "When you are strong enough to sing us Siebel's great song."

"There," said Fanny Dover, "there is a mercenary host for you. He means to have a song out of you. Till then you are his prisoner."

"No, no, she is mine," said Miss Gale; "and she shan't

go till she has sung me 'Hail Columbia!' None of your Italian trash for me."

Ina smiled, and said it was a fair condition, provided that "Hail Columbia," with which composition unfortunately she was unacquainted, was not beyond her powers. "I have often sung for money," said she, "but this time" — here she opened her grand arms, and took Rhoda Gale to her bosom — "I shall sing for love."

"Now we have settled that," said Vizard, "my mind is more at ease, and I will retire."

"One moment," said Ina, turning to him. Then in a low and very meaning voice, "*There is something else.*"

"No doubt there is plenty," said Miss Gale sharply; "and, by my authority, I postpone it all till you are stronger. Bid us good-by for the present, Mr. Vizard."

"I obey," said he. "But, madam, please remember I am always at your service. Send for me when you please, and the oftener the better for me."

"Thank you, my kind host. Oblige me with your hand."

He gave her his hand. She took it, and put her lips to it with pure and gentle and seemly gratitude, and with no loss of dignity, though the act was humble.

He turned his head away, to hide the emotion that act and the touch of her sweet lips caused him; Miss Gale hurried him out of the room.

"You naughty patient," said she, "you must do nothing to excite yourself."

"Sweet physician, loving nurse, I am not excited."

Miss Gale felt her heart to see.

"Gratitude does not excite," said Ina. "It is too tame a feeling in the best of us."

"That is a fact," said Miss Gale; "so let us all be grateful, and avoid exciting topics. Think what *I* should feel if you had a relapse. Why, you would break my heart."

"Should I?"

"I really think you would, tough as it is. One gets so fond of an unselfish patient. You cannot think how rare they are, dear. You are a pearl. I cannot afford to lose you."

"Then you shall not," said Ina, firmly. "Know that I, who seem so weak, am a woman of great resolution. I will follow good counsel; I will postpone all dangerous topics till I am stronger; I will live. For I will not grieve the true friends calamity has raised me."

Of course Fanny told Zoe all about this interview. She listened gloomily: and all she said was, "Sisters do not go for much, when a man is in love."

"Do brothers, when a woman is?" said Fanny.

"I dare say they go for as much as they are worth."

"Zoe, that is not fair. Harrington is full of affection for you; but you will not go near him. Any other man would be very angry. Do pray make an effort, and come down to dinner to-day."

"No, no; he has you, and his Klosking; and I have my broken heart. I *am* alone; and so I will be all alone."

She cried and sobbed, but she was obstinate, and Fanny could only let her have her own way in that.

Another question was soon disposed of. When Fanny invited her into the sick-room, she said, haughtily, "I go there no more. Cure her, and send her away, if Harrington will let her go. I dare say she is to be pitied."

"Of course she is. She is your fellow-victim, if you would only let yourself see it."

"Unfortunately, instead of pitying her, I hate her. She has destroyed my happiness, and done herself no good. He does not love her, and never will."

Fanny found herself getting angry, so she said no

more; for she was determined nothing should make her quarrel with poor Zoe. But after dinner, being *tête-à-tête* with Vizard, she told him she was afraid Zoe could not see things as they were; and she asked him if he had any idea what had become of Severne.

"Fled the country, I suppose."

"Are you sure he is not lurking about?"

"What for?"

"To get a word with Zoe — alone."

"He will not come near this. I will break every bone in his skin if he does."

"But he is so sly; he might hang about."

"What for? She never goes out; and, if she did, have you so poor an opinion of her as to think she would speak to him?"

"Oh, no; and she would forbid him to speak to her. But he would be sure to persist, and he has such wonderful powers of explanation, and she is blinded by love; I think he would make her believe black was white, if he had a chance; and if he is about he will get a chance some day. She is doing the very worst thing she could — shutting herself up so. Any moment she will turn wild, and rush out reckless. She is in a dangerous state, you mark my words; she is broken-hearted, and yet she is bitter against everybody, except that young villain, and he is the only enemy she has in the world. I don't believe Mademoiselle Klosking ever wronged her, nor never will. Appearances are against her; but she is a good woman, or I am a fool. Take my advice, Harrington, and be on your guard. If he had written a penitent letter to Mademoiselle Klosking, that would be a different thing; but he ignores her, and that frightens me for Zoe."

Harrington would not admit that Zoe needed any other safeguard against a detected scoundrel than her own sense of dignity. He consented, however, to take

precautions, if Fanny would solemnly promise not to tell Zoe, and so wound her. On that condition, he would see his head keeper to-morrow, and all the keepers and watchers should be posted so as to encircle the parish with vigilance. He assured Fanny these fellows had a whole system of signals to the ear and eye, and Severne could not get within a mile of the house undetected. "But," said he, "I will not trust to that alone. I will send an advertisement to the local papers and the leading London journals, so worded, that the scoundrel shall know his forgery is detected, and that he will be arrested on a magistrate's warrant if he sets foot in Barfordshire."

Fanny said that was capital, and, altogether, he had set her mind at rest.

"Then do as much for me," said Vizard. "Please explain a remarkable phenomenon. You were always a bright girl, and no fool; but not exactly what humdrum people would call a good girl. You are not offended?"

"The idea! Why, I have publicly disowned goodness again and again. You have heard me."

"So I have, but was not that rather deceitful of you? for you have turned out as good as gold. Anxiety has kept me at home of late, and I have watched you. You live for others; you are all over the house to serve two suffering *women*. That is real charity, not sexual charity, which humbugs the world, but not me. You are cook, housemaid, butler, nurse, and friend, to both of them. In an interval of your time, so creditably employed, you come and cheer me up with your bright little face, and give me wise advice. I know that women are all humbugs; only you are a humbug reversed, and deserve a statue — and trimmings. You have been passing yourself off for a naughty girl, and all the time you were an extra good one."

"And that puzzles the woman-hater, the cynical student, who says he has fathomed woman. My poor dear Harrington, if you cannot read so shallow a character as I am, how will you get on with those ladies up-stairs, — Zoe, who is as deep as the sea, and turbid with passion — and the Klosking, who is as deep as the ocean?"

She thought a moment, and said, "There, I will have pity on you. You shall understand one woman before you die, and that is me; I'll give you the clew to my seeming inconsistencies — if *you* will give *me* a cigarette."

"What, another hidden virtue! You smoke?"

"Not I, except when I happen to be with a noble soul, who won't tell."

Vizard found her a Russian cigarette, and lighted his own cigar, and she lectured as follows: —

"What women love, and can't do without, if they are young and healthy, and spirited, is — excitement. I am one who pines for it. Now society is so constructed that, to get excitement you must be naughty. Waltzing all night, and flirting all day, are excitement. Crochet, and church, and examining girls in St. Matthew, and dining *en famille*, and going to bed at ten, are stagnation. Good girls — that means stagnant girls; I hate and despise the tame little wretches, and I never was one, and never will be. But now look here; we have two ladies in love with one villain — that is exciting. One gets nearly killed in the house — that is gloriously exciting; the other is broken-hearted. If I were to be a bad girl, and say, 'It is not my business; I will leave them to themselves, and go my little mill round of selfishness as before,' — why, what a fool I must be! I should lose excitement. Instead of that, I run and get things for the Klosking — excitement. I cook for her, and nurse her, and sit up half the night — excitement. Then I run to Zoe, and do my best for her — and get snubbed

— excitement. Then I sit at the head of your table, and order you — excitement. Oh, it is lovely!"

"Shall you not be sorry when they both get well, and routine recommences?"

"Of course I shall; that is the sort of good girl I am. And oh, when that fatal day comes, how I shall flirt! Heaven help my next flirtee! I shall soon flirt out the stigma of a good girl. You mark my words, I shall flirt with some *married man*, after this. I never did that yet. But I shall; I know I shall — ah! — there, I have burned my finger."

"Never mind; that is exciting."

"As such I accept it. Good-by. I must go and relieve Miss Gale. Exit the good girl on her mission of charity; ha! ha! ha!" She hummed a *valse à deux temps*, and went dancing out with such a whirl, that her petticoats, which were ample, and not, as now, like a sack tied at the knees, made quite a cool air in the room.

She had not been gone long, when Miss Gale came down, full of her patient. She wanted to get her out of bed during the daytime; but said she was not strong enough to sit up. Would he order an invalid couch down from London? She described the article, and where it was to be had.

He said Harris should go up in the morning, and bring one down with him.

He then put her several questions about her patient; and at last asked her, with an anxiety he in vain endeavored to conceal, what she thought was the relation between her and Severne?

Now it may be remembered that Miss Gale had once been on the point of telling him all she knew, and had written him a letter. But, at that time, the Klosking was not expected to appear on the scene in person. Were she now to say she had seen her and Severne living

together, Rhoda felt that she should lower her patient. She had not the heart to do that.

Rhoda Gale was not of an amorous temperament, and she was all the more open to female attachments. With a little encouragement she would have loved Zoe, but she had now transferred her affection to the Klosking. She replied to Vizard, almost like a male lover defending the object of his affection, —

"The exact relation is more than I can tell: but I think he has lived upon her, for she was richer than he was; and I feel sure he has promised her marriage. And my great fear now is lest he should get hold of her and keep his promise. He is as poor as a rat, or a female physician: and she has a fortune, in her voice, and has money besides, Miss Dover tells me. Pray keep her here till she is quite well, please."

"I will."

"And then let me have her up at Hillstoke. She is beginning to love me, and I dote on her."

"So do I."

"Ah, but you must not."

"Why not?"

"Because" —

"Well, why not?"

"She is not to love any man again, who will not marry her. I won't let her. I'll kill her first, I love her so: a rogue she shan't marry, and I can't let you marry her, because her connection with that Severne is mysterious. She seems the soul of virtue, but I could not let *you* marry her until things are clearer."

"Make your mind easy. I will not marry her — nor anybody else — till things are a great deal clearer than I have ever found them, where your sex is concerned."

Miss Gale approved the resolution.

Next day, Vizard posted his keepers, and sent his advertisements to the London and country journals.

Fanny came into his study, to tell him there was more trouble — Miss Maitland taken seriously ill, and had written to Zoe.

"Poor old soul!" said Vizard. "I have a great mind to ride over and see her."

"Somebody ought to go," said Fanny.

"Well, you go."

"How can I — with Zoe, and Mademoiselle Klosking, and you, to look after?"

"Instead of one old woman. Not much excitement in that."

"No, cousin. To think of your remembering! Why, you must have gone to bed sober."

"I often do."

"You were always an eccentric land-owner."

"Don't you talk. You are a caricature."

This banter was interrupted by Miss Gale, who came to tell Harrington Mademoiselle Klosking desired to see him, at his leisure.

He said he would come directly.

"Before you go," said Miss Gale, "let us come to an understanding. She had only two days' fever: but that fever, and the loss of blood, and the shock to her nerves, brought her to death's door by exhaustion. Now she is slowly recovering her strength, because she has a healthy stomach, and I give her no stimulants to spur and then weaken her, but choice and simple esculents, the effect of which I watch, and vary them accordingly. But the convalescent period is always one of danger, especially from chills to the body and excitements to the brain. At no period are more patients thrown away for want of vigilance. Now I can guard against chills and other bodily things, but not against excitements — unless

you co-operate. The fact is, we must agree to avoid speaking about Mr. Severne. We must be on our guard. We must parry — we must evade — we must be deaf, stupid, slippery; but no Severne — for five or six days more, at all events."

Thus forewarned, Vizard, in due course, paid his second visit to Ina Klosking.

He found her propped up with pillows this time. She begged him to be seated.

She had evidently something on her mind, and her nurses watched her like cats.

"You are fond of music, sir?"

"Not of all music: I adore good music, I hate bad; and I despise mediocre. Silence is golden indeed, compared with poor music."

"You are right, sir. Have you good music in the house?"

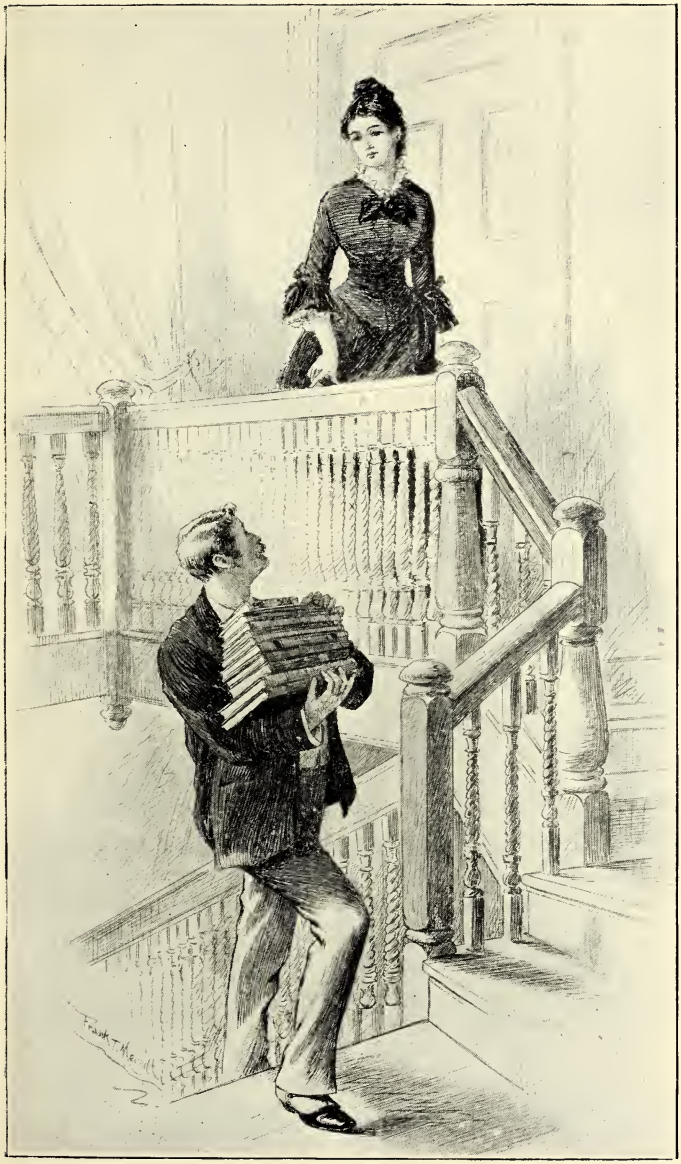
"A little. I get all the operas, and you know there are generally one or two good things in an opera — amongst the rubbish. But the great bulk of our collection is rather old-fashioned. It is sacred music; oratorios, masses, anthems, services, chants. My mother was the collector. Her tastes were good, but narrow. Do you care for that sort of music?"

"Sacred music? Why, it is, of all music, the most divine, and soothes the troubled soul. Can I not see the books? I read music like words. By reading I almost hear."

"We will bring you up a dozen books to begin on."

He went down directly; and such was his pleasure in doing anything for the Klosking, that he executed the order in person, brought up a little pile of folios and quartos, beautifully bound and lettered, a lady having been the collector.

Now, as he mounted the stairs, with his very chin



AS HE MOUNTED THE STAIRS.

upon the pile, who should he see looking over the rails at him, but his sister Zoe!

She was sadly changed. There was a fixed ashen pallor on her cheek, and a dark circle under her eyes.

He stopped to look at her. "My poor child," said he, "you look very ill."

"I am very ill, dear."

"Would you not be better for a change?"

"I might."

"Why coop yourself up in your own room? Why deny yourself a brother's sympathy?"

The girl trembled, and tears came to her eyes.

"Is it with me you sympathize?" said she.

"Can you doubt it, Zoe?"

Zoe hung her head a moment, and did not reply. Then she made a diversion. "What are those books? — Oh, I see; your mother's music-books. Nothing is too good for *her*."

"Nothing in the way of music-books is too good for her. For shame! — are you jealous of that unfortunate lady?"

Zoe made no reply.

She put her hands before her face, that Vizard might not see her mind.

Then he rested his books on a table, and came and took her head in his hands paternally. "Do not shut yourself up any longer. Solitude is dangerous to the afflicted. Be more with me than ever; and let this cruel blow bind us more closely, instead of disuniting us."

He kissed her lovingly; and his kind words set her tears flowing. But they did her little good. They were bitter tears. Between her and her brother there was now a barrier sisterly love could not pass. He hated and despised Edward Severne; and she only distrusted him, and feared he was a villain: she loved him still with

every fibre of her heart, and pined for his explanation of all that seemed so dark.

So then he entered the sick-room with his music-books; and Zoe, after watching him in, without seeming to do so, crept away to her own room.

Then there was rather a pretty little scene. Miss Gale and Miss Dover, on each side of the bed, held a heavy music-book, and Mademoiselle Klosking turned the leaves and read, when the composition was worth reading. If it was not, she quietly passed it over, without any injurious comment.

Vizard watched her from the foot of the bed, and could tell in a moment by her face whether the composition was good, bad, or indifferent. When bad, her face seemed to turn impassive, like marble; when good, to expand; and when she lighted on a masterpiece, she was almost transfigured, and her face shone with elevated joy.

This was a study to the enamoured Vizard, and it did not escape the quick-sighted doctress. She despised music on its own merits, but she despised nothing that could be pressed into the service of medicine: and she said to herself, "I'll cure her with esculents and music."

The book was taken away to make room for another.

Then said Ina Klosking, "Mr. Vizard, I desire to say a word to you. Excuse me, my dear friends."

Miss Gale colored up. She had not foreseen a *tête-à-tête* between Vizard and her patient. However, there was no help for it: and she withdrew to a little distance with Fanny; but she said to Vizard, openly and expressively, "Remember!"

When they had withdrawn a little way, Ina Klosking fixed her eyes on Vizard, and said, in a low voice, "Your sister!"

Vizard started a little at the suddenness of this, but he said nothing: he did not know what to say.

When she had waited a little, and he said nothing, she spoke again. "Tell me something about her. Is she good? Forgive me: it is not that I doubt."

"She is good, according to her lights."

"Is she proud?"

"Yes."

"Is she just?"

"No. And I never met a woman that was."

"Indeed it is rare. Why does she not visit me?"

"I don't know."

"She blames me for all that has happened."

"I don't know, madam. My sister looks very ill, and keeps her own room. If she does not visit you, she holds equally aloof from us all. She has not taken a single meal with me for some days."

"Since I was your patient and your guest."

"Pray do not conclude from that— Who can interpret a woman?"

"Another woman. Enigmas to you, we are transparent to each other. Sir, will you grant me a favor? Will you persuade Miss Vizard to see me here alone — all alone? It will be a greater trial to me than to her, for I am weak. In this request I am not selfish. She can do nothing for me; but I can do a little for her, to pay the debt of gratitude I owe this hospitable house. May Heaven bless it, from the roof to the foundation stone!"

"I will speak to my sister: and she shall visit you — with the consent of your physician."

"It is well," said Ina Klosking, and beckoned her friends; one of whom, Miss Gale, proceeded to feel her pulse, with suspicious glances at Vizard. But she found the pulse calm, and said so.

Vizard took his leave, and went straight to Zoe's room. She was not there. He was glad of that; for it gave him hopes she was going to respect his advice, and give up her solitary life.

He went down-stairs, and on to the lawn, to look for her. He could not see her anywhere.

At last, when he had given up looking for her, he found her in his study, crouched in a corner.

She rose at sight of him, and stood before him. "Harrington," said she, in rather a commanding way, "Aunt Maitland is ill, and I wish to go to her."

Harrington stared at her, with surprise. "You are not well enough yourself."

"Quite well enough in body to go anywhere."

"Well, but" — said Harrington — she caught him up impatiently. "Surely you cannot object to my visiting Aunt Maitland. She is dangerously ill. I had a second letter, this morning — see." And she held him out a letter.

Harrington was in a difficulty. He felt sure this was not her real motive; but he did not like to say so, harshly, to an unhappy girl. He took a moderate course. "Not just now, dear," said he.

"What! am I to wait till she dies?" cried Zoe, getting agitated at his opposition.

"Be reasonable, dear. You know you are the mistress of this house. Do not desert me just now. Consider the position. It is a very chattering county. I entertain Mademoiselle Klosking; I could not do otherwise when she was nearly killed in my hall. But for my sister to go away whilst she remains here, would have a bad effect."

"It is too late to think of that, Harrington. The mischief is done; and you must plead your eccentricity. Why should I bear the blame? I never approved of it."

"You would have sent her to an inn, eh?"

"No; but Miss Gale offered to take her."

"Then I am to understand that you propose to mark your reprobation of my conduct by leaving my house."

"What! publicly? Oh, no. You may say to yourself that your sister could not bear to stay under the same roof with Mr. Severne's mistress. But this chattering county shall never know my mind. My aunt is dangerously ill. She lives but thirty miles off. She is a fit object of pity. She is — a — respectable — lady; she is all alone: no female physician; no flirt, turned sister of charity; no woman-hater — to fetch and carry for her. And so I shall go to her. I am your sister, not your slave. If you grudge me your horses, I will go on foot."

Vizard was white with wrath, but governed himself like a man. "Go on, young lady," said he; "go on. Jeer, and taunt, and wound the best brother any young madwoman ever had. But don't think I'll answer you as you deserve, I'm too cunning. If I was to say an unkind word to you, I should suffer the tortures of the damned. So go on."

"No, no. Forgive me, Harrington. It is your opposition that drives me wild. Oh, have pity on me. I shall go mad, if I stay here. Do, pray, pray, pray let me go to Aunt Maitland."

"You shall go, Zoe. But I tell you plainly, this step will be a blow to our affection — the first."

Zoe cried at that. But, as she did not withdraw her request, Harrington told her, with cold civility, that she must be good enough to be ready directly after breakfast to-morrow, and take as little luggage as she could with convenience to herself.

Horses were sent on that night to the "Fox," an inn half-way between Vizard Court and Miss Maitland's place.

In the morning, a light barouche, with a sling for luggage, came round, and Zoe was soon seated in it. Then, to her surprise, Harrington came out, and sat beside her.

She was pleased at this, and said, "What! are you going with me, dear; all that way?"

"Yes, to save appearances," said he: and took out a newspaper to read.

This froze Zoe, and she retired within herself.

It was a fine fresh morning; the coachman drove fast; the air fanned her cheek; the motion was enlivening; the horses' hoofs rang quick and clear upon the road. Fresh objects met the eye every moment. Her heart was as sad and aching as before; but there arose a faint encouraging sense that some day she might be better, or things might take some turn.

When they had rolled about ten miles, she said in a low voice, "Harrington."

"Well?"

"You were right. Cooping one's self up is the way to go mad."

"Of course it is."

"I feel a little better now; a very little."

"I am glad of it."

But he was not hearty: and she said no more.

He was extremely attentive to her all the journey, and, indeed, had never been half so polite to her.

This, however, led to a result he did not intend nor anticipate. Zoe, being now cool, fell into a state of compunction and dismay. She saw his affection for her leaving him, and stiff politeness coming instead.

She leaned forward, put her hands on his knees, and looked, all scared, in his face. "Harrington!" she cried, "I was wrong. What is Aunt Maitland to me? You are my all. Bid him turn the horses' heads and go home."

"Why, we are only six miles from the place."

"What does that matter? We shall have had a good long drive together, and I will dine with you after it;

and I will ride or drive with you every day, if you will let me."

Vizard could not help smiling. He was disarmed. "You impulsive young monkey," said he, "I shall do nothing of the kind. In the first place, I couldn't turn back from anything; I'm only a man. In the next place, I have been thinking it over as you have; and this is a good move of ours, though I was a little mortified at first. Occupation is the best cure of love; and this old lady will find you plenty. Besides, nursing improves the character. Look at that frivolous girl, Fanny, how she has come out. And you know, Zoe, if you get sick of it in a day or two, you have only to write to me, and I will send for you directly. A short absence, with so reasonable a motive as visiting a sick aunt, will provoke no comments. It is all for the best."

This set Zoe at her ease; and brother and sister resumed their usual manners.

They reached Miss Maitland's house, and were admitted to her sick-room. She was really very ill; and thanked them so pathetically for coming to visit a poor lone old woman, that now they were both glad they had come.

Zoe entered on her functions with an alacrity that surprised herself; and Vizard drove away. But he did not drive straight home. He had started from Vizard Court with other views. He had telegraphed Lord Uxmoor, the night before, and now drove to his place, which was only five miles distant. He found him at home, and soon told him his errand. "Do you remember meeting a young fellow at my house, called Severne?"

"I do," said Lord Uxmoor, dryly enough.

"Well, he has turned out an impostor."

Uxmoor's eye flashed. He had always suspected Severne of being his rival, and a main cause of his

defeat. "An impostor?" said he: "that is rather a strong word. Certainly I never heard a gentleman tell such a falsehood as he volunteered about — what's the fellow's name? — a detective."

"Oh, Poikilus! That is nothing. That was one of his white lies. He is a villain all round, and a forger by way of climax."

"A forger! What! a criminal?"

"Rather. Here are his drafts. The drawer and acceptor do not exist. The whole thing was written by Edward Severne, whose indorsement figures on the bill. He got me to cash these bills. I deposit them with you, and I ask you for a warrant to commit him, if he should come this way."

"Is that likely?"

"Not at all; it is a hundred to one he never shows his nose again in Barfordshire. When he was found out, he bolted, and left his very clothes in my house. I packed them off to the 'Swan' at Taddington. He has never been heard of since; and I have warned him, by advertisement, that he will be arrested if ever he sets foot in Barfordshire."

"Well, then?"

"Well, then — I am not going to throw away a chance. The beggar had the impudence to spoon on my sister Zoe. That was my fault, not hers. He was an old college acquaintance, and I gave him opportunities: I deserve to be horsewhipped. However, I am not going to commit the same blunder twice. My sister is in your neighborhood for a few days."

"Ah!"

"And perhaps you will be good enough to keep your eye on her."

"I feel much honored by such a commission. But you have not told me where Miss Vizard is."

"With her aunt, Miss Maitland, at Somerville Villa, near Bagley. *Apropos*, I had better tell you what she is there for, or your good dowager will be asking her to parties. She has come to nurse her Aunt Maitland. The old lady is seriously ill, and all our young coquettes are going in for nursing. We have a sick lady at our house, I am sorry to say, and she is nursed like a queen, by Doctress Gale, and ex-Flirt Fanny Dover. Now is fulfilled the saying that was said, —

'O woman! in our hours of ease,' —

I spare you the rest, and simply remark that our Zoe, fired by the example of those two ladies, has devoted herself to nursing Aunt Maitland. It is very good of her, but experience tells me she will very soon find it extremely trying; and, as she is a very pretty girl, and, therefore, a fit subject of male charity, you might pay her a visit now and then, and show her that this best of all possible worlds contains young gentlemen of distinction, with long and glossy beards, as well as peevish old women, who are extra selfish and tyrannical when they happen to be sick."

Uxmoor positively radiated as this programme was unfolded to him. Vizard observed that, and chuckled inwardly.

He then handed him the forged acceptances.

Lord Uxmoor begged him to write down the facts on paper, and also his application for the warrant. He did so. Lord Uxmoor locked the paper up, and the friends parted: Vizard drove off, easy in his mind, and congratulating himself, not unreasonably, on his little combination, by means of which he had provided his sister with a watch-dog, a companion, and an honorable lover, all in one.

Uxmoor put on his hat, and strode forth into his own

grounds, with his heart beating high at this strange turn of things in favor of his love.

Neither foresaw the strange combinations which were to arise out of an event that appeared so simple and one-sided.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Ina Klosking's cure was retarded by the state of her mind. The excitement and sharp agony her physician had feared, died away as the fever of the brain subsided; but then there settled down a grim, listless lethargy, which obstructed her return to health and vigor. Once she said to Rhoda Gale, "But I have nothing to get well for." As a rule, she did not speak her mind, but thought a great deal. She often asked after Zoe; and her nurses could see that her one languid anxiety was somehow connected with that lady. Yet she did not seem hostile to her now, nor jealous. It was hard to understand her; she was reserved, and very deep.

The first relief to the deadly languor of her mind came to her from music. That was no great wonder; but, strange to say, the music that did her good was neither old enough to be revered, nor new enough to be fashionable. It was English music, too, and *passée* music. She came across a collection of Anglican anthems and services, — written, most of it, towards the end of the last century and the beginning of this. The composers' names promised little: they were Blow, Nares, Greene, Kent, King, Jackson, etc. The words and the music of these compositions seemed to suit one another; and, as they were all quite new to her, she went through them almost eagerly, and hummed several of the strains, and, with her white but now thin hand, beat time to others. She even sent for Vizard, and said to him, "You have a treasure here. Do you know these compositions?"

He inspected his treasure. "I remember," said he,

"my mother used to sing this one, 'When the eye saw her, then it blessed her,' and parts of this one, 'Hear my prayer;' and, let me see, she used to sing this psalm, 'Praise the Lord,' by Jackson. I am ashamed to say I used to ask for 'Praise the Lord Jackson,' meaning to be funny, not devout."

"She did not choose ill," said Ina. "I thought I knew English music, yet here is a whole stream of it new to me. Is it esteemed?"

"I think it was once; but it has had its day."

"That is strange; for here are some immortal qualities. These composers had brains, and began at the right end; they selected grand and tuneful words, great and pious thoughts; they impregnated themselves with those words, and produced appropriate music. The harmonies are sometimes thin, and the writers seem scarcely to know the skilful use of discords; but they had heart and invention; they saw their way clear, before they wrote the first note; there is an inspired simplicity and fervor. If all these choice things are dead, they must have fallen upon bad interpreters."

"No doubt," said Vizard; "so please get well, and let me hear these pious strains, which my poor dear mother loved so well, interpreted worthily."

The Klosking's eyes filled. "That is a temptation," said she simply. Then she turned to Rhoda Gale. "Sweet physician, he has done me good. He has given me something to get well for."

Vizard's heart yearned. "Do not talk like that," said he buoyantly; then, in a broken voice, "Heaven forbid you should have nothing better to live for than that!"

"Sir," said she gravely, "I have nothing better to live for now than to interpret good music worthily."

There was a painful silence.

Ina broke it. She said, quite calmly, "First of all, I

wish to know how others interpret these strains your mother loved, and I have the honor to agree with her."

"Oh," said Vizard, "we will soon manage that for you. These things are not defunct; only unfashionable. Every choir in England has sung them, and can sing them, after a fashion: so, at twelve o'clock to-morrow, look out — for squalls!"

He mounted his horse, rode into the cathedral town, distant eight miles, and arranged with the organist for himself, four leading boys, and three lay clerks. He was to send a carriage in for them, after the morning service, and return them in good time for vespers.

Fanny told Ina Klosking, and she insisted on getting up.

By this time Doctress Gale had satisfied herself that a little excitement was downright good for her patient, and led to refreshing sleep. So they dressed her loosely, but very warmly, and rolled her to the window on her invalid couch, set at a high angle. It was a fine, clear day in October, keen but genial; and, after muffling her well, they opened the window.

While she sat there, propped high, and inhaling the pure air, Vizard conveyed his little choir, by another staircase, into the ante-chamber; and, under his advice, they avoided preludes, and opened in full chorus with Jackson's song of praise.

At the first burst of sacred harmony, Ina Klosking was observed to quiver all over.

They sang it rather coarsely, but correctly and boldly, and with a certain fervor. There were no operatic artifices to remind her of earth; the purity and the harmony struck her full. The great singer and sufferer lifted her clasped hands to God, and the tears flowed fast down her cheeks.

These tears were balm to that poor lacerated soul, tormented by many blows.

> "O lacrymarum fons, tenero sacros
> Ducemtium ortus ex animo, quater
> Felix, in imo qui scatentem
> Pectore, te, pia nympha, sensit."

Rhoda Gale, who hated music like poison, crept up to her, and enfolding her delicately, laid a pair of wet eyes softly on her shoulder.

Vizard now tapped at the door, and was admitted from the music-room. He begged Ina to choose another composition from her book. She marked a service and two anthems, and handed him the volume, but begged they might not be done too soon, one after the other. That would be quite enough for one day, especially if they would be good enough to repeat the hymn of praise to conclude; "for," said she, "these are things to be digested."

Soon the boys' pure voices rose again, and those poor dead English composers, with prosaic names, found their way again to the great foreign singer's soul.

They sang an anthem, which is now especially despised by those great critics, the organists of the country — "My song shall be of mercy and judgment."

The Klosking forgave the thinness of the harmony, and many little faults in the vocal execution. The words, no doubt, went far with her, being clearly spoken. She sat meditating, with her moist eyes raised, and her face transfigured, and at the end she murmured to Vizard, with her eyes still raised, "After all, they are great and pious words, and the music has at least this crowning virtue — it means the words." Then she suddenly turned upon him and said, "There is another person in this house who needs this consolation as much as I do.

Why does she not come? But perhaps she is with the musicians."

"Whom do you mean?"

"Your sister."

"Why, she is not in the house."

Ina Klosking started at this information, and bent her eyes keenly and inquiringly on him.

"She left two days ago."

"Indeed!"

"To nurse a sick aunt."

"Indeed! Had she no other reason?"

"Not that I know of," said Vizard; but he could not help coloring a little.

The little choir now sang a service, King, in F. They sang the "Magnificat" rudely, and rather profanely, but recovered themselves in the "Dimittis."

When it was over, Ina whispered, "'To be a light to lighten the Gentiles.' That is an inspired duet. Oh, how it might be sung!"

"Of course it might," whispered Vizard; "so you have something to get well for."

"Yes, my friend — thanks to you and your sainted mother."

This, uttered in a voice which, under the healing influence of music, seemed to have regained some of its rich melody, was too much for our cynic, and he bustled off to hide his emotion, and invited the musicians to lunch.

All the servants had been listening on the stairs, and the hospitable old butler plied the boys with sparkling Moselle, which, being himself reared on mighty port, he thought a light and playful wine — just the thing for women and children. So after luncheon they sang rather wild, and the Klosking told Vizard, dryly, that would do for the present.

Then he ordered the carriage for them, and asked Mademoiselle Klosking when she would like them again.

"When *can* I?" she inquired, rather timidly.

"Every day, if you like — Sundays and all."

"I must be content with every other day."

Vizard said he would arrange it so, and was leaving her; but she begged him to stay a moment.

"She would be safer here," said she, very gravely.

Vizard was taken aback by the suddenness of this return to a topic he was simple enough to think she had abandoned. However, he said, "She is safe enough. I have taken care of that, you may be sure."

"You have done well, sir," said Ina, very gravely.

She said no more to him; but just before dinner Fanny came in, and Miss Gale went for a walk in the garden. Ina pinned Fanny directly. "Where is Miss Vizard?" said she, quietly.

Fanny colored up; but seeing in a moment that fibs would be dangerous, said, mighty carelessly, "She is at Aunt Maitland's."

"Where does *she* live, dear?"

"In a poky little place called 'Somerville Villa.'"

"Far from this?"

"Not very. It is forty miles by the railway, but not thirty by the road; and Zoe went in a barouche all the way."

Mademoiselle Klosking thought a little, and then taking Fanny Dover's hand, said to her, very sweetly, "I beg you to honor me with your confidence, and tell me something. Believe me, it is for no selfish motive I ask you; but I think Miss Vizard is in danger. She is too far from her brother, and too far from me. Mr. Vizard says she is safe. Now, can you tell me what he means? How can she be safe? Is her heart turned to stone, like mine?"

"No, indeed," said Fanny. "Yes, I will be frank with you; for I believe you are wiser than any one of us. Zoe is not safe, left to herself. Her heart is anything but stone; and Heaven knows what wild, mad thing she might be led into. But I know perfectly well what Vizard means: no, I don't like to tell it you all. It will give you pain."

"There is little hope of that. I am past pain."

"Well, then — Miss Gale will scold me."

"No, she shall not."

"Oh, I know you have got the upper hand even of her; so if you promise I shall not be scolded, I'll tell you. You see, I had my misgivings about this very thing; and as soon as Vizard came home — it was he who took her to Aunt Maitland — I asked him what precautions he had taken to hinder that man from getting hold of her again. Well, then — oh, I ought to have begun by telling you Mr. Severne forged bills to get money out of Harrington."

"Good heavens!"

"Oh, Harrington will never punish him, if he keeps his distance; but he has advertised in all the papers, warning him, that, if he sets foot in Barfordshire, he will be arrested and sent to prison."

Ina Klosking shook her head. "When a man is in love with such a woman as that, dangers could hardly deter him."

"That depends upon the man, I think. But Harrington has done better than that. He has provided her with a watch-dog, — the best of all watch-dogs, another lover. Lord Uxmoor lives near Aunt Maitland, and he adores Zoe; so Harrington has commissioned him to watch her, and cure her and all. I wish he'd cure *me* — an earl's coronet and twenty thousand a year!"

"You relieve my mind," said Ina. Then, after a

pause, "But let me ask you one question more. Why did you not tell me Miss Vizard was gone?"

"I don't know," said Fanny, coloring up. "*She* told me not."

"Who?"

"Why, the vixen in command. She orders everybody."

"And why did she forbid you?"

"Don't know."

"Yes, you do. Kiss me, dear. There, I will distress you with no more questions. Why should I? Our instincts seldom deceive us. Well, so be it; I have something more to get well for, and I will."

Fanny looked up at her inquiringly.

"Yes," said she; "the daughter of this hospitable house will never return to it whilst I am in it. Poor girl! She thinks *she* is the injured woman. So be it. I will get well — and leave it."

Fanny communicated this to Miss Gale, and all she said was, "She shall go no farther than Hillstoke, then; for I love her better than any man can love her."

Fanny did not tell Vizard; and he was downright happy, seeing the woman he loved recover, by slow degrees, her health, her strength, her color, her voice. Parting was not threatened. He did not realize that they should ever part at all. He had vague hopes that, whilst she was under his roof, opportunity might stand his friend, and she might requite his affection. All this would not bear looking into very closely: for that very reason he took particular care not to look into it very closely; but hoped all things, and was happy. In this condition he received a little shock.

A one-horse fly was driven up to the door, and a card brought in —

"Mr. Joseph Ashmead."

Vizard was always at home at Vizard Court, except to convicted bores. Mr. Ashmead was shown into his study.

Vizard knew him at a glance. The velveteen coat had yielded to tweed; but another loud tie had succeeded to the one "that fired the air at Homburg." There, too, was the wash-leather face, and other traits Vizard professed to know an actress's lover by. Yes, it was the very man, at sight of whom he had fought down his admiration of La Klosking, and declined an introduction to her. Vizard knew the lady better now. But still he was a little jealous even of her acquaintances, and thought this one unworthy of her; so he received him with stiff but guarded politeness, leaving him to open his business.

Ashmead, overawed by the avenue, the dozen gables, fourscore chimneys, etc., addressed him rather obsequiously, but with a certain honest trouble, that soon softened the bad impression caused by his appearance.

"Sir," said he, "pray excuse this intrusion of a stranger; but I am in great anxiety. It is not for myself, but for a lady, a very distinguished lady, whose interests I am charged with. It is Mademoiselle Klosking, the famous singer."

Vizard maintained a grim silence.

"You may have heard of her."

"I have."

"I almost fancy you once heard her sing — at Homburg."

"I did."

"Then I am sure you must have admired her, being a gentleman of taste. Well, sir, it is near a fortnight since I heard from her."

"Well, sir?"

"You will say, what is that to you? But the truth is, she left me, in London, to do certain business for her, and she went down to this very place. I offered to come

with her, but she declined. To be sure, it was a delicate matter, and not at all in my way. She was to write to me, and report progress, and give me her address, that I might write to her; but nearly a fortnight has passed. I have not received a single letter. I am in real distress and anxiety. A great career awaits her in England, sir; but this silence is so mysterious, so alarming, that I begin actually to hope she has played the fool, and thrown it all up, and gone abroad with that blackguard."

"What blackguard, sir?"

Joseph drew in his horns. "I spoke too quick, sir," said he; "it is no business of mine. But these brilliant women are as mad as the rest in throwing away their affections. They prefer a blackguard to a good man. It is the rule. Excuse my plain-speaking."

"Mr. Ashmead," said Vizard, "I may be able to answer your questions about this lady; but, before I do so, it is right I should know how far you possess her confidence. To speak plainly, have you any objection to tell me what is the precise relation between you and her?"

"Certainly not, sir; I am her theatrical agent."

"Is that all?"

"Not quite. I have been a good deal about her lately, and have seen her in deep distress. I think I may almost say I am her friend, though a very humble one."

Vizard did not yet quite realize the truth, that this Bohemian had in his heart one holy spot, — his pure devotion and unsexual friendship for that great artist. Still his prejudices were disarmed, and he said, "Well, Mr. Ashmead, excuse my cross-questioning you. I will now give myself the pleasure of setting your anxieties at rest. Mademoiselle Klosking is in this house."

Ashmead stared at him, and then broke out, "In this house? Oh, Lord! how can that be?"

"It happened in a way very distressing to us all, though the result is now so delightful. Mademoiselle Klosking called here on a business, with which, perhaps, you are acquainted."

"I am, sir."

"Unfortunately, she met with an accident in my very hall — an accident that endangered her life, sir; and of course we took charge of her. She has had a zealous physician, and good nurses, and she is recovering slowly. She is quite out of danger, but still weak. I have no doubt she will be delighted to see you. Only, as we are all under the orders of her physician, and that physician is a woman, and a bit of a vixen, you must allow me to go and consult her first."

Vizard retired, leaving Joseph happy, but mystified.

He was not long alone. In less than a minute he had for companions some well-buttered sandwiches made with smoked ham, and a bottle of old madeira: the solids melted in his mouth, the liquid ran through his veins like oil charged with electricity and elixir vitæ.

By and by a female servant came for him, and ushered him into Ina Klosking's room.

She received him with undisguised affection, and he had much ado to keep from crying. She made him sit down near her in the vast embrasure of the window, and gave him a letter to read she had just written to him.

They compared notes very rapidly; but their discourse will not be given here, because so much of it would be repetition.

They were left alone to talk, and they did talk for more than an hour. The first interruption, indeed, was a recitativo with chords, followed by a verse from the leading treble.

Mr. Ashmead looked puzzled; the Klosking eyed him demurely.

Before the anthem concluded, Vizard tapped, and was admitted from the music-room. Ina smiled, and waved him to a chair. Both the men saw, by her manner, they were not to utter a sound while the music was going on. When it ceased, she said, "Do you approve that, my friend?"

"If it pleases you, madam," replied the wary Ashmead.

"It does more than please me; it does me good."

"That reconciles me to it at once."

"Oh, then you do not admire it for itself?"

"Not — very — much."

"Pray, speak plainly. I am not a tyrant, to impose my tastes."

"Well then, madam, I feel very grateful to anything that does you good: otherwise, I should say the music was — rather dreary; and the singing — very insipid."

The open struggle between Joseph's honesty and his awe of the Klosking tickled Vizard, so that he leaned back in his chair and laughed heartily.

The Klosking smiled superior. "He means," said she, "that the music is not operatic, and the boys do not clasp their hands, and shake their shoulders, and sing passionately, as women do in a theatre. Heaven forbid they should! If this world is all passion, there is another which is all peace; and these boys' sweet artless tones are the nearest thing we shall get in this world to the unimpassioned voices of the angels. They are fit instruments for pious words set by composers who, however obscure they may be, were men inspired, and have written immortal strains, which, as I hear them, seem hardly of this world — they are so free from all mortal dross."

Vizard assented warmly. Ashmead asked permission

to hear another. They sang the "Magnificat" by King, in F.

"Upon my word," said Ashmead, "there is a good deal of 'go' in that."

Then they sang the "Nunc Dimittis." He said, a little dryly, there was plenty of repose in that.

"My friend," said she, "there is — to the honor of the composer. The 'Magnificat' is the bright and lofty exultation of a young woman, who has borne the Messiah, and does not foresee his sufferings, only the boon to the world and the glory to herself. But the 'Dimittis' is the very opposite. It is a gentle joy, and the world contentedly resigned by a good old man, fatigued, who has run his race, and longs to sleep after life's fever. When next you have the good fortune to hear that song, think you see the sun descending red and calm after a day of storms, and an aged Christian saying, 'Good-night,' — and you will honor poor dead King as I do. The music that truly reflects great words was never yet small music, write it who may."

"You are right, madam," said Ashmead. "When I doubted its being good music, I suppose I meant salable."

"Ah, *voilà!*" said the Klosking. Then, turning to Vizard for sympathy, "What this faithful friend understands by good music, is music that can be sold for a good deal of money."

"That is so," said Ashmead, stoutly. "I am a theatrical agent. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. You have tried it more than once, you know, but it would not work."

Ashmead amused Vizard, and he took him into his study, and had some more conversation with him. He even asked him to stay in the house; but Ashmead was shy, and there was a theatre at Taddington. So he said

he had a good deal of business to do; he had better make the "Swan" his headquarters. "I shall be at your service all the same, sir, or Mademoiselle Klosking's."

"Have a glass of madeira, Mr. Ashmead."

"Well, sir, to tell the truth, I *have* had one or two."

"Then it knows the road."

"You are very good, sir. What madeira! Is this the wine the doctors ran down a few years ago? They couldn't have tasted it."

"Well, it is like ourselves, improved by travelling. That has been twice to India."

"It will never go again, past me," said Ashmead, gayly. "My mouth is a cape it will never weather."

He went to his inn.

Before he had been there ten minutes, up rattled a smart servant in a smart dog-cart.

"Hamper — for Joseph Ashmead, Esquire."

"Anything to pay?"

"What for? — it's from Vizard Court."

And the dog-cart rattled away.

Joseph was in the hall, and witnessed this phenomenon. He said to himself, "I wish I had a vast acquaintance — ALL COUNTRY GENTLEMEN."

That afternoon, Ina Klosking insisted on walking up and down the room, supported by Mesdemoiselles Gale and Dover. The result was fatigue and sleep; that is all.

"To-morrow," said she, "I will have but one live crutch. I must and will recover my strength."

In the evening, she insisted on both ladies dining with Mr. Vizard. Here, too, she had her way.

Vizard was in very good spirits, and when the servants were gone, complimented Miss Gale on her skill.

"*Our* skill, you mean," said she. "It was you who prescribed this new medicine of the mind, the psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; and it was you who

administered the Ashmead, and he made her laugh, or nearly — and that *we* have never been able to do. She must take a few grains of Ashmead every day. The worst of it is, I am afraid we shall cure her too quickly, and then we shall lose her. But that was to be expected. I am very unfortunate in my attachments. I always was. If I fall in love with a woman, she is sure to hate me, or else die, or else fly away. I love this one to distraction, so she is sure to desert me, because she couldn't misbehave, and I won't *let* her die."

"Well," said Vizard, "you know what to do. Retard the cure. That is one of the arts of your profession."

"And so it is; but how can I, when I love her? No, we must have recourse to our benevolent tyrant again. He must get Miss Vizard back here, before my goddess is well enough to spread her wings and fly."

Vizard looked puzzled. "This," said he, "sounds like a riddle, or female logic."

"It is both," said Rhoda. "Miss Dover, give him the *mot d'énigme*. I'm off — to the patient I adore."

She vanished swiftly, and Vizard looked to Fanny for a solution. But Fanny seemed rather vexed with Miss Gale, and said nothing. Then he pressed her to explain.

She answered him, with a certain reluctance, "Mademoiselle Klosking has taken into her head that Zoe will never return to this house whilst she is in it."

"Who put that into her head, now?" said Vizard bitterly.

"Nobody, upon my honor. A woman's instinct."

"Well?"

"She is horrified at the idea of keeping your sister out of her own house, so she is getting well to go; and the strength of her will is such that she *will* get well."

"All the better; but Zoe will soon get tired of Somer-

ville Villa. A little persuasion will bring her home, especially if you were to offer to take her place."

"Oh, I would do that to oblige you, Harrington, if I saw any good at the end of it. But please think twice. How can Zoe and that lady ever stay under the same roof? How can they meet at your table, and speak to each other? They are rivals."

"They are both getting cured, and neither will ever see the villain again."

"I hope not; but who can tell? Well, never mind *them.* If their eyes are not opened by this time they will get no pity from me. It is you I think of now." Then, in a hesitating way, and her cheeks mantling higher and higher with honest blushes, "You have suffered enough already from women. I know it is not my business, but it does grieve me to see you going into trouble again. What good can come of it? Her connection with that man, so recent, and so — strange. The world *will* interpret its own way. Your position in the county — every eye upon you. I see the way in — no doubt it is strewed with flowers; but I see no way out. Be brave in time, Harrington. It will not be the first time. She must be a good woman somehow, or faces, eyes, and voices, and ways, are all a lie. But if she is good, she is very unfortunate, and she will give you a sore heart for life if you don't mind. I'd clench my teeth, and shut my eyes, and let her go in time."

Vizard groaned aloud, and at that a tear or two rolled down Fanny's burning cheeks.

"You are a good little girl," said Vizard affectionately; "but I *cannot.*"

He hung his head despondently, and muttered, "I see no way out either; but I yield to fate. I feared her, and fled from her. She has followed me. I can resist no more. I drift. Some men never know happiness. I

shall have had a happy fortnight, at all events. I thank you, and respect you for your advice; but I can't take it. So now I suppose you will be too much offended to oblige me."

"Oh, dear, no."

"Would you mind writing to Aunt Maitland, and saying you would like to take Zoe's place?"

"I will do it with pleasure, to oblige you. Besides, it will be a fib, and it is so long since I have told a good fib. When shall I write?"

"Oh, about the end of the week."

"Yes, that will be time enough. Miss Gale won't *let* her go till next week. Ah, after all, how nice and natural it is to be naughty! Fibs and flirtation, welcome home! This is the beauty of being good — and I shall recommend it to all my friends on this very account — you can always leave off at a moment's notice, without any trouble. Now, naughtiness sticks to you like a burr."

So, with no more ado, this new Mentor became Vizard's accomplice, and they agreed to get Zoe back before the Klosking could get strong enough to move with her physician's consent.

As the hamper of madeira was landed in the hall of the "Swan" inn, a genial voice cried, "You are in luck." Ashmead turned, and there was Poikilus peering at him from the doorway of the commercial-room.

"What is the game now?" thought Ashmead. But what he said was, "Why, I know that face. I declare, it is the gent that treated me at Homburg. Bring in the hamper, Dick." Then to Poikilus, "Have ye dined yet?"

"No. Going to dine in half an hour. Roast gosling. Just enough for two."

"We'll divide it, if you like, and I'll stand a bottle of old madeira. My old friend, Squire Vizard, has just sent it me. I'll just have a splash; dinner will be ready by then." He bustled out of the room, but said as he went, "I say, old man, open the hamper, and put two bottles just within the smile of the fire."

He then went up-stairs, and plunged his head in cold water, to clear his faculties for the encounter.

The friends sat down to dinner, and afterwards to the madeira, both gay and genial outside, but within, full of design — their object being to pump each other.

In the encounter at Homburg, Ashmead had an advantage; Poikilus thought himself unknown to Ashmead. But this time there was a change. Poikilus knew by this time that La Klosking had gone to Vizard Court. How she had known Severne was there, puzzled him a good deal, but he had ended by suspecting Ashmead in a vague way.

The parties, therefore, met on even terms. Ashmead resolved to learn what he could about Severne, and Poikilus to learn what he could about Zoe Vizard and Mademoiselle Klosking.

Ashmead opened the ball. "Been long here?"

"Just come."

"Business?"

"Yes. Want to see if there's any chance of my getting paid for that job."

"What job?"

"Why, the Homburg job. Look here — I don't know why I should have any secrets from a good fellow like you; only you must not tell anybody else."

"Oh, honor bright!"

"Well, then, I am a detective."

"Ye don't mean that?"

"I'm Poikilus."

"Good heavens! Well, I don't care. I haven't murdered anybody. Here's your health, Poikilus. I say, you could tell a tale or two."

"That I could. But I'm out of luck this time. The gentleman that employed me has mizzled; and he promised me fifty pounds. I came down here in hopes of finding him. Saw him once in this neighborhood."

"Well, you won't find him here, I don't think. You must excuse me, but your employer is a villain. He has knocked a lady down, and nearly killed her."

"You don't say that?"

"Yes, that beautiful lady, the singer, you saw in Homburg."

"What! the lady that said he should have his money?"

"The same."

"Why, he must be mad."

"No; a scoundrel, *that is all.*"

"Then she won't give him his money after that?"

"Not if I can help it. But if she likes to pay you your commission, I shall not object to that."

"You are a good fellow."

"What is more, I shall see her to-morrow, and I will put the question to her for you."

Poikilus was profuse in his thanks, and said he began to think it was his only chance. Then he had a misgiving. "I have no claim on the lady," said he; "and I am afraid I have been a bad friend to her. I did not mean it, though, and the whole affair is dark to me."

"You are not very sharp, then, for a detective," said Ashmead. "Well, shut your mouth, and open your eyes. Your Mr. Severne was the lady's lover, and preyed upon her. He left her; she was fool enough to love him still, and pined for him. He is a gambler, and was gambling by my side when Mademoiselle Klosking came in: so he cut his lucky, and left me fifty pounds to

play for him, and she put the pot on, and broke the bank. I didn't know who he was, but we found it out by his photograph. Then you came smelling after the money, and we sold you nicely, my fine detective. We made it our business to know where you wrote to: Vizard Court. She went down there, and found him just going to be married to a beautiful young lady. She collared him. He flung her down, and cut her temple open — nearly killed her. She lies ill in the house; and the other young lady is gone away broken-hearted."

"Where to?"

"How should I know? What is that to you?"

"Why, don't you see? Wherever she is, he won't be far off. He likes her best, don't he?"

"It don't follow that she likes him, now she has found him out. He had better not go after her, or he'll get a skinful of broken bones. My friend Squire Vizard is the man to make short work with him, if he caught the blackguard spooning after his sister."

"And serve him right. Still, I wish I knew where that young lady is."

"I dare say I could learn, if I made it my business."

Having brought the matter to that point, Poikilus left it, and simply made himself agreeable. He told Ashmead his experiences; and as they were, many of them, strange and dramatic, he kept him a delighted listener till midnight.

The next day Ashmead visited Mademoiselle Klosking, and found her walking up and down the room with her hand on Miss Gale's shoulder.

She withdrew into the embrasure, and had some confidential talk with him. As a matter of course, he told her about Poikilus, and that he was hunting down Severne for his money.

"Indeed!" said the Klosking. "Please tell me every word that passed between you."

He did so, as nearly as he could remember.

Mademoiselle Klosking leaned her brow upon her hand a considerable time, in thought. Then she turned on Ashmead, and said, quietly, "That Poikilus is still acting for *him*, and the one thing they desire to learn is where to find Miss Vizard, and delude her to her ruin."

"No, no!" cried Ashmead, violently; but the next moment his countenance fell. "You are wiser than I am," said he; "it may be. Confound the sneak! I'll give it him, next time I see him. Why, he must love villany for its own sake. I as good as said you would pay him his fifty pounds."

"What fifty pounds? His fifty pounds is a false hood like himself. Now, my friend, please take my instructions, my positive instructions."

"Yes, madam."

"You will not change your friendly manner; show no suspicion nor anger. If they are cunning, we must be wise; and the wise always keep their temper. You will say Miss Vizard has gone to Ireland, but to what part is only known to her brother. Tell him this, and be very free and communicative on all other subjects; for this alone has any importance now. As for me, I can easily learn where Somerville Villa is; and, in a day or two, shall send you to look after her. One thing is clear — I had better lose no time in recovering my strength. Well, my will is strong; I will lose no time. Your arm, monsieur;" and she resumed her promenade.

Ashmead, instructed as above, dined again with the detective; but out of revenge gave him but one bottle of madeira. As they sipped it, he delivered a great many words, and in the middle of them, said: "Oh, by the by,

I asked after that poor young lady. Gone to Ireland, but they didn't know what part."

After dinner, Ashmead went to the theatre. When he came back, Poikilus was gone.

So did Wisdom baffle Cunning that time.

But Cunning did not really leave the field; that very evening an aged man, in green spectacles, was inquiring about the postal arrangements to Vizard Court; and the next day he might have been seen, in a back street of Taddington, talking to the village postman, and afterwards drinking with him. It was Poikilus groping his way.

CHAPTER XXV.

A FEW words avail to describe the sluggish waters of the Dead Sea, but what pen can portray the Indian Ocean lashed and tormented by a cyclone?

Even so, a few words have sufficed to show that Ina Klosking's heart was all benumbed and deadened; and, with the help of insult, treachery, loss of blood, brain-fever, and self-esteem rebelling against villany, had outlived its power of suffering poignant torture.

But I cannot sketch in a few words, nor paint in many, the tempest of passion in Zoe Vizard. Yet it is my duty to try and give the reader some little insight into the agony, the changes, the fury, the grief, the tempest of passion, in a virgin heart. In such a nature, the great passions of the mind often rage as fiercely, or even more so, than in older and experienced women.

Literally, Zoe Vizard loved Edward Severne one minute and hated him the next; gave him up for a traitor, and then vowed to believe nothing until she had heard his explanation; burned with ire at his silence, sickened with dismay at his silence. Then, for a while, love and faith would get the upper hand, and she would be quite calm. Why should she torment herself? An old sweetheart, abandoned long ago, had come between them; he had, unfortunately, done the woman an injury in his wild endeavor to get away from her. Well; what business had she to use force? No doubt he was ashamed, afflicted at what he had done, being a man; or was in despair, seeing that lady installed in her brother's house, and *her* story, probably a parcel of falsehoods,

listened to. Then she would have a gleam of joy; for she knew he had not written to Ina Klosking. But soon Despondency came down, like a dark cloud; for she said to herself, "He has left us both. He sees the woman he does not love will not let him have the one he does love; and so he has lost heart, and will have no more to say to either."

When her thoughts took this turn, she would cry piteously, but not for long. She would dry her eyes, and burn with wrath all round; she would still hate her rival, but call her lover a coward — a contemptible coward.

After her day of raging, and grieving, and doubting, and fearing, and hoping, and despairing, night overtook her with an exhausted body, a bleeding heart, and weeping eyes. She had been so happy — on the very brink of paradise; and now she was deserted. Her pillow was wet every night. She cried in her very sleep; and, when she woke in the morning, her body was always quivering; and in the very act of waking, came a horror and an instinctive reluctance to face the light that was to bring another day of misery.

Such is a fair, though loose, description of her condition.

The slight fillip given to her spirits by the journey did her a morsel of good; but it died away. Having to nurse Aunt Maitland did her a little good at first. But she soon relapsed into herself, and became so *distraite* that Aunt Maitland, who was all self, being an invalid, began to speak sharply to her.

On the second day of her visit to Somerville Villa, as she sat brooding at the foot of her aunt's bed, suddenly she heard horses' feet, and then a ring at the hall-door. Her heart leaped. Perhaps he had come to explain all. He might not choose to go to Vizard Court. What if he

had been watching as anxiously as herself, and had seized the first opportunity? In a moment her pale cheek rivalled carmine.

The girl brought up a card —

"Lord Uxmoor."

The color died away directly. "Say I am very sorry, but at this moment I cannot leave my aunt."

The girl stared with amazement, and took down the message.

Uxmoor rode away.

Zoe felt a moment's pleasure. No; if she could not see the right man, she would not see the wrong. That, at least, was in her power.

Nevertheless, in the course of the day, remembering Uxmoor's worth, and the pain she had already given him, she was almost sorry she had indulged herself at his expense.

Superfluous contrition! He came next day, as a matter of course. She liked him none the better for coming, but she went down-stairs to him.

He came towards her, but started back, and uttered an exclamation. "You are not well," he said, in tones of tenderness and dismay.

"Not very," she faltered, for his open, manly concern touched her.

"And you have come here to nurse this old lady? Indeed, Miss Vizard, you need nursing yourself. You know it is some time since I had the pleasure of seeing you, and the change is alarming. May I send you Dr. Atkins, my mother's physician?"

"I am much obliged to you. No."

"Oh, I forgot! You have a physician of your own sex. Why is she not looking after you?"

"Miss Gale is better employed. She is at Vizard

Court, in attendance on a far more brilliant person, Mademoiselle Klosking, a professional singer. Perhaps you know her?"

"I saw her at Homburg."

"Well, she met with an accident in our hall — a serious one; and Harrington took her in, and has placed all his resources, his lady physician and all, at her service: he is so fond of *music*."

A certain satirical bitterness peered through these words; but honest Uxmoor did not notice it. He said, "Then, I wish you would let me be your doctor, for want of a better."

"And you think *you* can cure me?" said Zoe satirically.

"It does seem presumptuous. But, at least, I could do you a little good, if you could be got to try my humble prescription."

"What is it?" said Zoe, listlessly.

"It is my mare Phillis. She is the delight of every lady who mounts her. She is thoroughbred, lively, swift, gentle, docile, amiable, perfect. Ride her on these downs an hour or two every day. I'll send her over to-morrow. May I?"

"If you like. Rosa *would* pack up my riding-habit."

"Rosa was a prophetess."

Next day came Phillis, saddled, and led by a groom on horseback; and Uxmoor soon followed on an old hunter. He lifted Zoe to her saddle, and away they rode, the groom following at a respectful distance.

When they got on the downs, they had a delightful canter; but Zoe, in her fevered state of mind, was not content with that. She kept increasing the pace, till the old hunter could no longer live with the young filly; and she galloped away from Lord Uxmoor, and made him ridiculous in the eyes of his groom.

The truth is, she wanted to get away from him.

He drew the rein, and stood stock-still. She made a circuit of a mile, and came up to him with heightened color and flashing eyes, looking beautiful.

"Well," said she, "don't you like galloping?"

"Yes; but I don't like cruelty."

"Cruelty!"

"Look at the mare's tail, how it is quivering, and her flanks panting! And no wonder. You have been over twice the Derby course, at a racing pace. Miss Vizard, a horse is not a steam-engine."

"I'll never ride her again," said Zoe. "I did not come here to be scolded. I will go home."

They walked slowly home in silence. Uxmoor hardly knew what to say to her; but at last he murmured, apologetically, "Never mind the poor mare, if you are any better for galloping her."

She waited a moment before she spoke, and then she said, "Well, yes; I am better. I'm better for my ride, and better for my scolding. Good-by." (Meaning forever.)

"Good-by," said he, in the same tone. Only he sent the mare next day, and followed her on a young thoroughbred.

"What!" said Zoe, "am I to have another trial?"

"And another after that."

So this time she would only canter very slowly, and kept stopping every now and then to inquire, satirically, if that would distress the mare.

But Uxmoor was too good-humored to quarrel for nothing. He only laughed, and said, "You are not the only lady who takes a horse for a machine."

These rides did her bodily health some permanent good; but their effect on her mind was fleeting. She was in fair spirits when she was actually bounding through the air; but she collapsed afterwards.

At first, when she used to think that Severne never came near her, and Uxmoor was so constant, she almost hated Uxmoor. So little does the wrong man profit by doing the right thing for a woman. I admit that, though not a deadly woman-hater myself.

But, by and by, she was impartially bitter against them both: the wrong man for doing the right thing, and the right man for not doing it.

As the days rolled by, and Severne did not appear, her indignation and wounded pride began to mount above her love. A beautiful woman counts upon pursuit, and thinks a man less than man, if he does not love her well enough to find her, though hid in the caves of ocean, or the labyrinths of Bermondsey.

She said to herself, "Then, he has no explanation to offer. Another woman has frightened him away from me. I have wasted my affections on a coward." Her bosom boiled with love and contempt and wounded pride; and her mind was tossed to and fro like a leaf in a storm. She began, by force of will, to give Uxmoor some encouragement; only, after it, she writhed and wept.

At last, finding herself driven to and fro like a leaf, she told Miss Maitland all, and sought counsel of her. She must have something to lean on.

The old lady was better by this time, and spoke kindly to her. She said Mr. Severne was charming, and she was not bound to give him up because another lady had past claims on him. But it appeared to her that Mr. Severne himself had deserted her. He had not written to her. Probably he knew something that had not yet transpired, and had steeled himself to the separation for good reasons. It was a decision she must accept. Let her then consider how forlorn is the condition of most deserted women compared with hers. Here was a

devoted lover, whom she esteemed, and who could offer her a high position and an honest love. If she had a mother, that mother would almost force her to engage herself at once to Lord Uxmoor. Having no mother, the best thing she could do would be to force herself, — to say some irrevocable words, and never look back. It was the lot of her sex not to marry the first love, and to be all the happier in the end for that disappointment, though at the time it always seemed eternal.

All this, spoken in a voice of singular kindness, by one who used to be so sharp, made Zoe's tears flow gently, and somewhat cooled her raging heart.

She began now to submit, and only cry at intervals, and let herself drift; and Uxmoor visited her every day, and she found it impossible not to esteem and regard him.

Nevertheless, one afternoon, just about his time, she was seized with such an aversion to his courtship, and such a revolt against the slope she seemed gliding down, that she flung on her bonnet and shawl, and darted out of the house to escape him. She said to the servant, "I am gone for a walk, if anybody calls."

Uxmoor did call, and, receiving this message, he bit his lip, sent the horse home, and walked up to the windmill, on the chance of seeing her anywhere. He had already observed she was never long in one mood; and, as he was always in the same mind, he thought perhaps he might be tolerably welcome, if he could meet her unexpected.

Meantime Zoe walked very fast to get away from the house as soon as possible, and she made a round of nearly five miles, walking through two villages, and, on her return, lost her way. However, a shepherd showed her a bridle-road, which, he told her, would soon take her to Somerville Villa, through "the small pastures;" and,

accordingly, she came into a succession of meadows not very large. They were all fenced, and gated; but the gates were only shut, not locked. This was fortunate; for they were new five-barred gates, and a lady does not like getting over these, even in solitude. Her clothes are not adapted.

There were sheep in some of these, cows in others, and the pastures wonderfully green and rich, being always well manured and fed down by cattle.

Zoe's love of color was soothed by these emerald fields, dotted with white sheep and red cows.

In the last field, before the lane that led to the village, a single beast was grazing. Zoe took no notice of him, and walked on; but he took wonderful notice of her, and stared, then gave a disagreeable snort. He took offence at her Indian shawl; and, after pawing the ground, and erecting his tail, he came straight at her, at a tearing trot, and his tail out behind him.

Zoe saw, and screamed violently, and ran for the gate ahead, which, of course, was a few yards farther from her than the gate behind. She ran for her life; but the bull, when he saw that, broke into a gallop directly, and came up fast with her. She could not escape.

At that moment a man vaulted clean over the gate, tore a pitchfork out of a heap of dung that luckily stood in the corner, and boldly confronted the raging bull, just in time; for at that moment Zoe lost heart, and crouched, screaming, in the side ditch, with her hands before her eyes.

The new-comer, rash as his conduct seemed, was country-bred, and knew what he was about: he drove a prong clean through the great cartilage of the bull's mouth, and was knocked down like a nine-pin, with the broken staff of the pitchfork in his hand; and the bull reared in the air with agony, the prong having gone clean through his

upper lip, in two places, and fastened itself, as one fastens a pin, in that leathery but sensitive organ.

Now Uxmoor was a university athlete; he was no sooner down than up. So, when the bull came down from his rearing, and turned to massacre his assailant, he was behind him, and, seizing his tail, twisted it, and delivered a thundering blow on his backbone, and followed it up by a shower of them on his ribs. "Run to the gate, Zoe!" he roared. Whack! — whack! — whack! "Run to the gate, I tell you!" Whack! — whack! — whack! — whack! — whack!

Thus ordered, Zoe Vizard, who would not have moved of herself, being in a collapse of fear, scudded to the gate, got on the right side of it, and looked over, with two eyes like saucers. She saw a sight incredible to her. Instead of letting the bull alone, now she was safe, Uxmoor was sticking to him like a ferret. The bull ran, tossing his nose with pain, and bellowing: Uxmoor, dragged by the tail, and compelled to follow, in preposterous, giant strides, barely touching the ground with the point of his toe, pounded the creature's ribs with such blows as Zoe had never dreamed possible. They sounded like flail on wooden floor, and each blow was accompanied with a loud jubilant shout. Presently, being a five's player, and ambidexter, he shifted his hand, and the tremendous whacks resounded on the bull's left side. The bull, thus belabored, and resounding like the big drum, made a circuit of the field, but found it all too hot: he knew his way to a certain quiet farmyard; he bolted, and came bang at Zoe once more, with furious eyes and gore-distilling nostrils.

But this time she was on the right side of the gate.

Yet she drew back, in dismay, as the bull drew near: and she was right, for, in his agony and amazement, the unwieldy but sinewy brute leaped the five-barred gate,

and cleared it all but the top rail. That he burst through, as if it had been paper, and dragged Uxmoor after him, and pulled him down, and tore him some yards along the hard road on his back, and bumped his head against a stone, and so got rid of him: then pounded away down the lane, snorting, and bellowing, and bleeding; the prong still stuck through his nostrils, like a pin.

Zoe ran to Uxmoor, with looks of alarm and tender concern, and lifted his head to her tender bosom; for his clothes were torn, and his cheeks and hands bleeding. But he soon shook off his confusion, and rose without assistance.

"Have you got over your fright?" said he; "that is the question."

"Oh, yes! yes! It is only you I am alarmed for. It is much better I should be killed than you."

"Killed! I never had better fun in my life. It was glorious. I stuck to him, and hit — there, I have not had anything I could hit as hard as I wanted to, since I used to fight with my cousin Jack at Eton. Oh, Miss Vizard, it was a whirl of Elysium. But I am sorry you were frightened. Let me take you home."

"Oh yes, but not that way; that is the way the monster went!" quivered Zoe.

"Oh, he has had enough of us."

"But I have had too much of him. Take me some other road — a hundred miles round. How I tremble!"

"So you do. Take my arm. — No, putting the tips of your fingers on it is no use; take it really — you want support. Be courageous, now — we are very near home."

Zoe trembled, and cried a little, to conclude the incident, but walked bravely home on Uxmoor's arm.

In the hall at Somerville Villa, she saw him change color, and insisted on his taking some port wine.

"I shall be very glad," said he.

A decanter was brought. He filled a large tumbler and drank it off like water.

This was the first intimation he gave Zoe that he was in pain, and his nerves hard tried; nor did she indeed arrive at that conclusion until he had left her.

Of course she carried all this to Aunt Maitland. That lady was quite moved by the adventure. She sat up in bed, and listened with excitement and admiration. She descanted on Lord Uxmoor's courage and chivalry, and congratulated Zoe that such a pearl of manhood had fallen at her feet. "Why, child," said she, "surely, after this, you will not hesitate between this gentleman and a beggarly adventurer who has nothing, not even the courage of a man. Turn your back on all such rubbish, and be the queen of the county. I'd be content to die to-morrow if I could see you Countess of Uxmoor."

"You shall live and see it, dear aunt," said Zoe, kissing her.

"Well," said Miss Maitland, "if anything can cure me, that will. And really," said she, "I feel better ever since that brave fellow began to bring you to your senses."

Admiration and gratitude being now added to esteem, Zoe received Lord Uxmoor next day with a certain timidity and half-tenderness she had never shown before; and, as he was by nature a rapid wooer, he saw his chance, and stayed much longer than usual; and, at last, hazarded a hope that he might be allowed to try and win her heart.

Thereupon she began to fence, and say that love was all folly. He had her esteem and her gratitude, and it would be better for both of them to confine their sentiments within those rational bounds.

"That I cannot do," said Uxmoor; "so I must ask your leave to be ambitious. Let me try and conquer your affection."

"As you conquered the bull?"

"Yes; only not so rudely, nor so quickly, I'll be bound."

"Well, I don't know why I should object. I esteem you more than anybody in the world. You are my beau-ideal of a man. If you can *make* me love you, all the better for me. Only, I am afraid you cannot."

"May I try?"

"Yes," said Zoe, blushing carnation.

"May I come every day?"

"Twice a day, if you like."

"I think I shall succeed — in time."

"I hope you may."

Then he kissed her hand devotedly — the first time in his life — and went away on wings.

Zoe flew up to her Aunt Maitland, flushed and agitated. "Aunt, I'm as good as engaged to him. I have said such unguarded things. I'm sure *he* will understand it that I consent to receive his addresses as my lover. Not that I really said so."

"I hope," said Aunt Maitland, "that you have committed yourself somehow or other, and cannot go back."

"I think I have. Yes; it is all over. I cannot go back now."

Then she burst out crying. Then she was near choking, and had to smell her aunt's salts, while still the tears ran fast.

Miss Maitland received this with perfect composure. She looked on them as the last tears of regret given to a foolish attachment at the moment of condemning it forever. She was old, and had seen these final tears shed by more than one loving woman, just before entering on her day of sunshine.

And now Zoe must be alone, and vent her swelling heart. She tied a handkerchief round her head, and

darted into the garden. She went round and round it, with fleet foot and beating pulses.

The sun began to decline, and a cold wind to warn her in. She came, for the last time, to a certain turn of the gravel walk, where there was a little iron gate leading into the wooded walk from the meadows.

At that gate she found a man. She started back, and leaned against the nearest tree, with her hands behind her.

It was Edward Severne — all in black, and pale as death; but not paler than her own face turned in a moment.

Indeed, they looked at each other like two ghosts.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Zoe was the first to speak, or rather to gasp. "Why do you come here?"

"Because *you* are here."

"And how dare you come where I am? — now your falsehood is found out and flung into my very face!"

"I have never been false to you. At this moment I suffer for my fidelity."

"*You* suffer? I am glad of it. How?"

"In many ways: but they are all light compared with my fear of losing your love."

"I will listen to no idle words," said Zoe, sternly. "A lady claimed you before my face: why did you not stand firm, like a man, and say, 'You have no claim on me now; I have a right to love another, and I do'? Why did you fly? — because you were guilty."

"No," said he doggedly. "Surprised and confounded; but not guilty. Fool! — idiot! — that I was. I lost my head entirely. Yes, it is hopeless. You *must* despise me. You have a right to despise me."

"Don't tell me," said Zoe: "you never lose your head. You are always self-possessed and artful. Would to heaven I had never seen you!" She was violent.

He gave her time. "Zoe," said he, after a while, "if I had not lost my head, should I have ill-treated a lady, and nearly killed her?"

"Ah!" said Zoe, sharply, "that is what you have been suffering from, — remorse. And well you may. You ought to go back to her, and ask her pardon on your knees. Indeed, it is all you have left to do now."

"I know I ought."

"Then do what you ought. Good-by."

"I cannot. I hate her."

"What! because you have broken her heart, and nearly killed her?"

"No: but because she has come between me and the only woman I ever really loved, or ever can."

"She would not have done that if you had not given her the right. I see her now; she looked justice, and you looked guilt. Words are idle, when I can see her face before me still. No woman could look like that who was in the wrong. But you — guilt made you a coward: you were false to her, and false to me; and so you ran away from us both. You would have talked either of us over, alone; but we were together: so you ran away. You have found me alone now, so you are brave again: but it is too late. I am undeceived. I decline to rob Mademoiselle Klosking of her lover; so good-by."

And this time she was really going, but he stopped her. "At least don't go with a falsehood on your lips," said he, coldly.

"A falsehood! — Me!"

"Yes, it is a falsehood. How can you pretend I left that lady for you, when you know my connection with her had entirely ceased ten months before I ever saw your face?"

This staggered Zoe a moment; so did the heat and sense of injustice he threw into his voice.

"I forgot that," said she, naïvely; then, recovering herself, "you may have parted with her; but it does not follow that she consented. Fickle men desert constant women. It is done every day."

"You are mistaken again," said he. "When I first saw you, I had ceased to think of Mademoiselle Klosk-

ing; but it was not so when I first left her. I did not desert her; I tore myself from her. I had a great affection for her."

"You dare to tell me that. Well, at all events, it is the truth. Why did you leave her, then?"

"Out of self-respect. I was poor — she was rich, and admired. Men sent her bouquets, and bracelets, and flattered her behind the scenes, and I was lowered in my own eyes; so I left her. I was unhappy for a time; but I had my pride to support me, and the wound was healed long before I knew what it was to love, really to love."

There was nothing here that Zoe could contradict. She kept silence, and was mystified.

Then she attacked him on another quarter. "Have you written to her, since you behaved like a ruffian to her?

"No; and I never will, come what may. It is wicked of me; but I hate her. I am compelled to esteem her; but I hate her."

Zoe could quite understand that; but in spite of that she said, "Of course you do. Men always hate those they have used ill. Why did you not write to *me?* Had a mind to be impartial, I suppose?"

"I had reason to believe it would have been intercepted."

"For shame! Vizard is incapable of such a thing."

"Ah, you don't know how he is changed. He looks on me as a mad dog. Consider, Zoe: do pray take the real key to it all. He is in love with Mademoiselle Klosking, madly in love with her: and I have been so unfortunate as to injure her; nearly to kill her. I dare say he thinks it is on your account he hates me; but men deceive themselves. It is for *her* he hates me."

"Oh!"

"Ay. Think, for a moment, and you will see it is. *You* are not in his confidence. I am sure he has never told *you* that he ordered his keepers to shoot me down if I came about the house at night."

"Oh, no, no!" cried Zoe.

"Do you know he has raised the country against me, and has warrants out against me for forgery, because I was taken in by a rogue who gave me bills with sham names on them, and I got Vizard to cash them? As soon as we found out how I had been tricked, my uncle and I offered at once to pay him back his money. But no! he prefers to keep the bills, as a weapon."

Zoe began to be puzzled a little. But she said, "You have been a long time discovering all these grievances. Why have you held no communication all this time?"

"Because you were inaccessible. Does not your own heart tell you that I have been all these weeks trying to communicate, and unable? Why, I came three times under your window, at night, and you never, never would look out."

"I did look out ever so often."

"If I had been you I should have looked ten thousand times. I only left off coming when I heard the keepers were ordered to shoot me down. Not that I should have cared much; for I am desperate. But I had just sense enough left to see that, if my dead body had been brought bleeding into your hall some night, none of you would ever have been happy again. Your eyes would have been opened, all of you. Well, Zoe, you left Vizard Court — that I learned; but it was only this morning I could find out where you were gone: and you see I am here — with a price upon my head. Please read Vizard's advertisements."

She took them, and read them. A hot flush mounted to her cheek.

"You see," said he, "I am to be imprisoned if I set my foot in Barfordshire. Well, it will be false imprisonment, and Mademoiselle Klosking's lover will smart for it. At all events, I shall take no orders but from you. You have been deceived by appearances. I shall do all I can to undeceive you; and, if I cannot, there will be no need to imprison me for a deceit of which I was the victim, nor to shoot me like a dog for loving *you*. I will take my broken heart quietly away, and leave Barfordshire, and England, and the world, for aught I care."

Then he cried; and that made her cry directly.

"Ah!" she sighed, "we are unfortunate. Appearances are so deceitful. I see I have judged too hastily, and listened too little to my own heart, that always made excuses. But it is too late now."

"Why too late?"

"It is."

"But why?"

"It all looked so ugly, and you were silent. We are unfortunate. My brother would never let us marry; and besides — Oh, why did you not come before?"

"I might as well say, why did you not look out of your window? You could have done it without risking your life, as I did. Or why did you not advertise? You might have invited an explanation from 'E. S.,' under cover to so-and-so."

"Ladies never think of such things. You know that very well."

"Oh, I don't complain; but I do say that those who love should not be ready to reproach; they should put a generous construction. You might have known, and you ought to have known, that I was struggling to find you, and torn with anguish at my impotence."

"No, no. I am so young and inexperienced, and all

my friends against you. It is they who have parted us."

"How can they part us, if you love me still as I love you?"

"Because for the last fortnight I have not loved you, but hated you, and doubted you, and thought my only chance of happiness was to imitate your indifference: and whilst I was thinking so, another person has come forward — one whom I have always esteemed; and now, in my pity and despair, I have given him hopes." She hid her burning face in her hands.

"I see; you are false to me, and therefore you have suspected me of being false to you."

At that she raised her head high directly. "Edward, you are unjust. Look in my face, and you may see what I have suffered, before I could bring myself to condemn you."

"What! your paleness, that dark rim under your lovely eyes — am I the cause?"

"Indeed you are. But I forgive you. You are sadly pale and worn too. Oh, how unfortunate we are!"

"Do not cry, dearest," said he; "do not despair. Be calm, and let me know the worst. I will not reproach you, though you have reproached me. I love you as no woman can love. Come, tell me."

"Then the truth is, Lord Uxmoor has renewed his attention to me."

"Ah!"

"He has been here every day."

Severne groaned.

"Aunt Maitland was on his side, and spoke so kindly to me; and he saved my life from a furious bull. He is brave, noble, good, and he loves me. I have committed myself. I cannot draw back with honor."

"But from me you can, because I am poor, and hated,

and have no title. If you are committed to him, you are engaged to me."

"I am; so now I can go neither way. If I had poison I would take it this moment, and end all."

"For God's sake, don't talk so! I am sure you exaggerate. You cannot, in these few days, have pledged your faith to another. Let me see your finger. Ah! there's my ring on it still: bless you, my own darling Zoe, bless you!" and he covered her hand with kisses, and bedewed it with his ever-ready tears.

The girl began to melt, and all power to ooze out of her, mind and body. She sighed deeply, and said, "What can I do — I don't say with honor and credit, but with decency — what *can* I do?"

"Tell me, first, what you have said to him that you consider so compromising."

Zoe, with many sighs, replied, "I believe — I said — I was unhappy. And so I was. And I owned — that I admired — and esteemed him. And so I do. And then, of course, he wanted more, and I could not give more; and he asked might he try and *make* me love him; and — I said — I am afraid I said — he might, if he could."

"And a very proper answer too."

"Ah! but I said he might come every day. It is idle to deceive ourselves: I have encouraged his addresses. I can do nothing now with credit, but die, or go into a convent."

"When did he say this?"

"This very day."

"Then he has never acted on it."

"No, but he will. He will be here to-morrow, for certain."

"Then your course is plain. You must choose to-night between him and me. You must dismiss him by letter, or me upon the spot. I have not much fortune to offer

you, and no coronet; but I love you, and you have seen me reject a lovely and accomplished woman, whom I esteem as much as you do this lord. Reject him! Why, you have seen me fling her away from me like a dog, sooner than leave you in a moment's doubt of my love. If you cannot write a civil note declining an earl for me, your love is not worthy of mine, and I will begone with my love. I will not take it to Mademoiselle Klosking, though I esteem her as you do this lord; but, at all events, I will take it away from you, and leave you my curse instead, for a false, fickle girl, that could not wait one little month, but must fall, with her engaged ring on her finger, into another man's arms. Oh, Zoe! Zoe! who could have believed this of you?"

"Don't reproach *me*. I won't bear it," she cried, wildly.

"I hope not to have to reproach you," said he, firmly; "I cannot conceive your hesitating."

"I am worn out. Love has been too great a torment. Oh, if I could find peace!"

Again her tears flowed.

He put on a sympathizing air. "You shall have peace. Dismiss *him* as I tell you, and he will trouble you no more; shake hands with me, and say you prefer *him*, and I will trouble you no more. But with two lovers, peace is out of the question, and so is self-respect. I know I could not vacillate between you and Mademoiselle Klosking or any other woman."

"Ah, Edward, if I do this, you ought to love me very dearly!"

"I shall. Better than ever — if possible."

"And never make me jealous again."

"I never shall, dearest. Our troubles are over."

"Edward, I have been very unhappy. I could not bear these doubts again."

"You shall never be unhappy again."

"I must do what you require, I suppose. That is how it always ends; oh dear! oh dear!"

"Zoe, it must be done; you know it must."

"I warn you I shall do it as kindly as I can."

"Of course you will; you ought to."

"I must go in now; I feel very cold."

"How soon to-morrow will you meet me here?"

"When you please," said she, languidly.

"At ten o'clock?"

"Yes."

Then there was a tender parting, and Zoe went slowly in. She went to her own room, just to think it all over alone. She caught sight of her face in the glass. Her cheeks had regained color, and her eyes were bright as stars. She stopped and looked at herself. "There now," said she, "and I seem to myself to live again. I was mad to think I could ever love any man but him. He is my darling, my idol."

There was no late dinner at Somerville Villa. Indeed, ladies, left to themselves, seldom dine late. Nature is strong in them, and they are hungriest when the sun is high. At seven o'clock, Zoe Vizard was seated at her desk trying to write to Lord Uxmoor. She sighed, she moaned, she began, and dropped the pen and hid her face. She became almost wild; and in that state she at last dashed off what follows: —

DEAR LORD UXMOOR, — For pity's sake forgive the mad words I said to you to-day. It is impossible. I can do no more than admire and esteem you. My heart is gone from me forever. Pray forgive me, though I do not deserve it; and never see me nor look at me again. I ask pardon for my vacillation. It has been disgraceful; but it has ended, and I was under a great error, which I cannot explain to you, when I led you to believe I had a heart to give you. My eyes are opened.

Our paths lie asunder. Pray, pray, forgive me, if it is possible. I will never forgive myself, nor cease to bless and revere you, whom I have used so ill.

ZOE VIZARD.

That day, Uxmoor dined alone with his mother for a wonder, and he told her how Miss Vizard had come round; he told her also about the bull, but so vilely that she hardly comprehended he had been in any danger: these encounters are rarely described to the life, except by us who avoid them — except on paper.

Lady Uxmoor was much pleased. She was a proud, politic lady, and this was a judicious union of two powerful houses in the county, and one that would almost command the elections. But, above all, she knew her son's heart was in the match, and she gave him a mother's sympathy.

As she retired, she kissed him, and said, "When you are quite sure of the prize, tell me, and I will call upon her."

Being alone, Lord Uxmoor lighted a cigar, and smoked it in measureless content. The servant brought him a note on a salver. It had come by hand. Uxmoor opened it, and read every word straight through, down to "Zoe Vizard;" read it, and sat petrified.

He read it again. He felt a sort of sickness come over him. He swallowed a tumbler of port, a wine he rarely touched: but he felt worse now than after the bull-fight. This done, he rose and stalked like a wounded lion into the drawing-room, which was on the same floor, and laid the letter before his mother.

"You are a woman, too," said he, a little helplessly. "Tell me — what on earth does this mean?"

The dowager read it slowly and keenly, and said, "It means — another man."

"Ah!" said Uxmoor, with a sort of snarl.

"Have you seen any one about her?"

"No; not lately. At Vizard Court there was; but that is all over now, I conclude. It was a Mr. Severne, an adventurer, a fellow that was caught out in a lie before us all. Vizard tells me a lady came and claimed him before Miss Vizard, and he ran away."

"An unworthy attachment, in short?"

"Very unworthy, if it was an attachment at all."

"Was he at Vizard Court when she declined your hand?"

"Yes."

"Did he remain, after you went?"

"I suppose so. Yes, he must have."

"Then the whole thing is clear: that man has come forward again unexpectedly, or written, and she dismisses you. My darling, there is but one thing for you to do. Leave her, and thank her for telling you in time. A less honorable fool would have hidden it, and then we might have had a Countess of Uxmoor in the divorce court some day or other."

"I had better go abroad," said Uxmoor, with a groan. "This country is poisoned for me."

"Go, by all means. Let Janneway pack up your things to-morrow."

"I should like to kill that fellow first."

"You will not even waste a thought on him, if you are my son."

"You are right, mother. What am I to say to her?"

"Not a word."

"What! not answer her letter? It is humble enough, I am sure — poor soul! Mother, I am wretched, but I am not bitter, and my rival will revenge me."

"Uxmoor, your going abroad is the only answer she shall have. The wisest man, in these matters, who ever

lived, has left a rule of conduct to every well-born man —a rule which, believe me, is wisdom itself:—

> 'Le bruit est pour le fat, la plainte est pour le sot;
> L'honnête homme trompé s'éloigne, et ne dit mot.'

"You will make a tour, and not say a word to Miss Vizard, good, bad, or indifferent. I insist upon that."

"Very well. Thank you, dear mother: you guide me, and don't let me make a fool of myself; for I am terribly cut up. You will be the only Countess of Uxmoor in my day."

Then he kneeled at her feet, and she kissed his head, and cried over him; but her tears only made this proud lady stronger.

Next day he started on his travels.

Now, but for Zoe, he would on no account have left England just then: for he was going to build model cottages in his own village, upon designs of his own, each with a little plot, and a public warehouse or granary, with divisions for their potatoes and apples, etc. However, he turned this over in his mind while he was packing; he placed certain plans and papers in his despatch-box, and took his ticket to Taddington, instead of going at once to London. From Taddington he drove over to Hillstoke, and asked for Miss Gale. They told him she was fixed at Vizard Court. That vexed him: he did not want to meet Vizard. He thought it the part of a Jerry Sneak, to go and howl to a brother against his sister. Yet, if Vizard questioned him, how could he conceal there was something wrong? However, he went down to Vizard Court; but said to the servant who opened the door, "I am rather in a hurry, sir: do you think that you could procure me a few minutes with Miss Gale? You need not trouble Mr. Vizard."

"Yes, my laud. Certainly, my laud. Please step in the morning-room, my laud. Mr. Vizard is out."

That was fortunate, and Miss Gale came down to him directly.

Fanny took that opportunity to chatter and tell Mademoiselle Klosking all about Lord Uxmoor and his passion for Zoe. "And he will have her, too," said she, boldly.

Lord Uxmoor told Miss Gale he had called upon business. He was obliged to leave home for a time, and wished to place his projects under the care of a person who could really sympathize with them, and make additions to them, if necessary. "Men," said he, "are always making oversights in matters of domestic comfort: besides, you are full of ideas. I want you to be viceroy with full power, and act just as you would if the village belonged to you."

Rhoda colored high at the compliment.

"Wells, cows, granary, real education — what you like," said he. "I know your mind. Begin abolishing the lower orders in the only way they can be got rid of; by raising them in comfort, cleanliness, decency, and knowledge. Then I shall not be missed. I'm going abroad."

"Going abroad?"

"Yes. Here are my plans: alter them for the better if you can. All the work to be done by the villagers. Weekly wages. We buy materials. They will be more reconciled to improved dwellings when they build them themselves. Here are the addresses of the people who will furnish money. It will entail travelling; but my people will always meet you at the station, if you telegraph from Taddington. You accept? A thousand thanks. I am afraid I must be off."

She went into the hall with him, half bewildered, and only at the door found time to ask after Zoe Vizard.

"A little better, I think, than when she came."

"Does she know you are going abroad?"

"No; I don't think she does, yet. It was settled all in a hurry."

He escaped further questioning by hurrying away.

Miss Gale was still looking after him, when Ina Klosking came down, dressed for a walk, and leaning lightly on Miss Dover's arm. This was by previous consent of Miss Gale.

"Well, dear," said Fanny, "what did he say to you?"

"Something that has surprised and puzzled me very much." She then related the whole conversation, with her usual precision.

Ina Klosking observed quietly to Fanny that this did not look like successful wooing.

"I don't know that," said Fanny, stoutly. "Oh, Miss Gale, did you not ask him about her?"

"Certainly I did; and he said she was better than when she first came."

"There!" said Fanny, triumphantly.

Miss Gale gave her a little pinch, and she dropped the subject.

Vizard returned, and found Mademoiselle Klosking walking on his gravel. He offered her his arm, and was a happy man, parading her very slowly, and supporting her steps, and purring his congratulations into her ear. "Suppose I were to invite you to dinner, what would you say?"

"I think I should say 'To-morrow.'"

"And a very good answer, too. To-morrow shall be a *fête*."

"You spoil me."

"That is impossible."

It was strange to see them together; he so happy, she so apathetic, yet gracious.

Next morning came a bit of human nature, a letter

from Zoe to Fanny, almost entirely occupied with praises of Lord Uxmoor. She told the bull story better than I have — if possible — and, in short, made Uxmoor a hero of romance.

Fanny carried this in triumph to the other ladies, and read it out. "There!" said she. "Didn't I tell you?"

Rhoda read the letter, and owned herself puzzled. "I am not, then," said Fanny: "they are engaged — over the bull; like Europa and I forget who, — and so he is not afraid to go abroad now. That is just like the men. They coo directly the chase is over."

Now the truth was that Zoe was trying to soothe her conscience with eloquent praises of the man she had dismissed, and felt guilty.

Ina Klosking said little. She was puzzled too at first. She asked to see Zoe's handwriting. The letter was handed to her. She studied the characters. "It is a good hand," she said — "nothing mean there." And she gave it back.

But, with a glance she had read the address, and learned that the post town was Bagley.

All that day, at intervals, she brought her powerful understanding to bear on the paradox; and, though she had not the facts and the clew I have given the reader, she came near the truth in an essential matter. She satisfied herself that Lord Uxmoor was not engaged to Zoe Vizard. Clearly, if so, he would not leave England for months. She resolved to know more; and just before dinner she wrote a line to Ashmead, and requested him to call on her immediately.

That day she dined with Vizard and the ladies. She sat at Vizard's right hand, and he told her how proud and happy he was to see her there.

She blushed faintly, but made no reply.

She retired soon after dinner.

All next day she expected Ashmead.

He did not come.

She dined with Vizard next day, and retired to the drawing-room. The piano was opened, and she played one or two exquisite things, and afterwards tried her voice, but only in scales, and somewhat timidly, for Miss Gale warned her she might lose it, or spoil it, if she strained the vocal chord while her whole system was weak.

Next day Ashmead came with apologies. He had spent a day in the cathedral town on business. He did not tell her how he had spent that day, going about puffing her as the greatest singer of sacred music in the world, and paving the way for her engagement at the next festival.

Yet the single-hearted Joseph had really raised that commercial superstructure upon the sentiments she had uttered on his first visit to Vizard Court.

Ina now held a private conference with him. "I think," said she, "I have heard you say you were once an actor."

"I was, madam, and a very good one too."

"*Cela va sans dire.* I never knew one that was not. At all events, you can disguise yourself."

"Anything, madam, from Grandfather Whitehead to a boy in a pinafore. Famous for my make-ups."

"I wish you to watch a certain house, and not be recognized by a person who knows you."

"Well, madam, nothing is *infra dig.* if done for you: nothing is distasteful if done for you."

"Thank you, my friend. I have thought it well to put my instructions on paper."

"Ah, that is the best way."

She handed him the instructions. He read them, and

his eyes sparkled. "Ah! this is a commission I undertake with pleasure, and I'll execute it with zeal."

He left her, soon after, to carry out these instructions; and that very evening he was in the wardrobe of the little theatre, rummaging out a suitable costume, and also in close conference with the wig-maker.

Next day Vizard had his mother's sables taken out and aired; and drove Mademoiselle Klosking into Taddington in an open carriage. Fanny told her they were his mother's sables, and none to compare with them in the country.

On returning, she tried her voice to the harmonium in her own ante-chamber, and found it was gaining strength — like herself.

Meantime, Zoe Vizard met Severne in the garden, and told him she had written to Lord Uxmoor, and he would never visit her again. But she did not make light of the sacrifice this time. She had sacrificed her own self-respect as well as Uxmoor's, and she was sullen and tearful.

He had to be very wary and patient, or she would have parted with him too, and fled from both of them to her brother.

Uxmoor's wounded pride would have been soothed could he have been present at the first interview of this pair. He would have seen Severne treated with a *hauteur*, and a sort of savageness, he himself was safe from, safe in her unshaken esteem.

But the world is made for those who can keep their temper, especially the female part of the world.

Sad, kind, and loving, but never irritable, Severne smoothed down, and soothed, and comforted the wounded girl; and, seeing her two or three times a day — for she was completely mistress of her time — got her entirely into his power again.

Uxmoor did not reply.

She had made her selection. Love beckoned forward. It was useless to look back.

Love was omnipotent. They both began to recover their good looks, as if by magic; and as Severne's passion, though wicked, was earnest, no poor bird was ever more completely entangled by bird-lime than Zoe was caught by Edward Severne.

Their usual place of meeting was the shrubbery attached to Somerville Villa. The trees, being young, made all the closer shade; and the gravel walk meandered, and shut them out from view.

Severne used to enter this shrubbery by a little gate leading from the meadow, and wait under the trees till Zoe came to him. Vizard's advertisements alarmed him, and he used to see the coast clear before he entered the shrubbery, and also before he left it. He was so particular in this, that, observing one day an old man doddering about with a basket, he would not go in till he had taken a look at him. He found it was an ancient, white-haired villager gathering mushrooms. The old fellow was so stiff, and his hand so trembling, that it took him about a minute to gather a single fungus.

To give a reason for coming up to him, Severne said, "How old are you, old man?"

"I be ninety, measter, next Martinmas-day."

"Only ninety?" said our Adonis, contemptuously; "you look a hundred and ninety."

He would have been less contemptuous had he known that the mushrooms were all toadstools, and the village *centenaire* was Mr. Joseph Ashmead, resuming his original arts, and playing Grandfather Whitehead on the green grass.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mademoiselle Klosking told Vizard the time drew near when she must leave his hospitable house.

"Say a month hence." said he.

She shook her head.

"Of course you will not stay to gratify me," said he, half sadly, half bitterly. "But you will have to stay a week or two longer *par ordonnance du médecin.*"

"My physician is reconciled to my going. We must all bow to necessity."

This was said too firmly to admit a reply.

"The old house will seem very dark again whenever you do go," said Vizard, plaintively.

"It will soon be brightened by her who is its true and lasting light," was the steady reply.

A day or two passed with nothing to record, except that Vizard hung about Ina Klosking, and became, if possible, more enamoured of her, and more unwilling to part with her.

Mr. Ashmead arrived one afternoon about three o'clock, and was more than an hour with her. They conversed very earnestly, and, when he went, Miss Gale found her agitated.

"This will not do," said she.

"It will pass, my friend," said Ina. "I will sleep."

She laid herself down, and slept three hours before dinner.

She arose refreshed, and dined with the little party; and, on retiring to the drawing-room, she invited Vizard to join them at his convenience.

He made it his convenience in ten minutes.

Then she opened the piano, played an introduction, and electrified them all by singing the leading song in "Siebel." She did not sing it so powerfully as in the theatre; she would not have done that even if she could: but still she sang it out, and nobly. It seemed a miracle to hear such singing in a room.

Vizard was in raptures.

They cooled suddenly when she reminded him what he had said, that she must stay till she could sing Siebel's song. "I keep to the letter of the contract," said she. "My friends, this is my last night at Vizard Court."

"Please try and shake that resolution," said Vizard, gravely, to Mesdemoiselles Dover and Gale.

"They cannot," said Ina. "It is my destiny. And yet," said she, after a pause, "I would not have you remember me by that flimsy thing. Let me sing you a song your mother loved; let me be remembered in this house, as a singer, by that."

Then she sang Handel's song —

"What though I trace each herb and flower
That decks the morning dew?
Did I not own Jehovah's power,
How vain were all I knew!"

She sang it with amazing purity, volume, grandeur, and power, the lustres rang and shook, the hearts were thrilled, and the very souls of the hearers ravished. She herself turned a little pale in singing it, and the tears stood in her eyes.

The song and its interpretation were so far above what passes for music, that they all felt compliments would be an impertinence. Their eyes and their long-drawn breath paid the true homage to that great master rightly interpreted — a very rare occurrence.

"Ah," said she; "that was the hand could brandish Goliath's spear."

"And this is how you reconcile us to losing you," said Vizard. "You might stay, at least, till you had gone through my poor mother's collection."

"Ah, I wish I could. But I cannot; I must not. My fate forbids it."

"'Fate' and 'destiny,'" said Vizard, "stuff and nonsense! We make our own destiny. Mine is to be eternally disappointed, and happiness snatched out of my hands."

He had no sooner made this pretty speech than he was ashamed of it, and stalked out of the room, not to say any more unwise things.

This burst of spleen alarmed Fanny Dover. "There," said she, "now you cannot go. He is very angry."

Ina Klosking said she was sorry for that; but he was too just a man to be angry with her long, the day would come when he would approve her conduct. Her lip quivered a little as she said this, and the water stood in her eyes; and this was remembered and understood, long after, both by Miss Dover and Rhoda Gale.

"When does your Royal Highness propose to start?" inquired Rhoda Gale very obsequiously, and just a little bitterly.

"To-morrow at half-past nine o'clock, dear friend," said Ina.

"Then you will not go without me. You will get the better of Mr. Vizard, because he is only a man; but I am a woman, and have a will as well as you. If you make a journey to-morrow, I go with you. Deny me, and you shan't go at all." Her eyes flashed defiance.

Ina moved one step, took Rhoda's little defiant head, and kissed her cheek. "Sweet physician and kind friend, of course you shall go with me, if you will; and be a great blessing to me."

This reconciled Miss Gale to the proceedings. She packed up a carpet-bag, and was up early, making provisions of every sort for her patient's journey: air-pillows, soft warm coverings, medicaments, stimulants, etc., in a little bag slung across her shoulders. Thus furnished and equipped in a uniform suit of gray cloth and wide-awake hat, she cut a very sprightly and commanding figure, but more like Diana than Hebe.

The Klosking came down, a pale Juno, in travelling costume; and a quarter of an hour before the time, a pair-horse fly was at the door, and Mr. Ashmead in the hall.

The ladies were both ready.

But Vizard had not appeared.

This caused an uneasy discussion.

"He must be very angry," said Fanny in a half whisper.

"I cannot go while he is," sighed La Klosking. "There is a limit even to my courage."

"Mr. Harris," said Rhoda, "would you mind telling Mr. Vizard?"

"Well, miss," said Harris softly, "I did step in and tell him. Which he told me to go to the devil, miss, a hobservation I never knew him to make before."

This was not encouraging. Yet the Klosking quietly inquired where he was.

"In there, ma'am," said Harris. "In his study."

Mademoiselle Klosking, placed between two alternatives, decided with her usual resolution. She walked immediately to the door, and tapped at it; then, scarcely waiting for an instant, opened it and walked in with seeming firmness, though her heart was beating rather high.

The people outside looked at one another. "I wonder whether he will tell *her* to go to the devil?" said Fanny, who was getting tired of being good.

"No use," said Miss Gale; "she doesn't know the road."

When La Klosking entered the study, Vizard was seated, disconsolate, with two pictures before him. His face was full of pain, and La Klosking's heart smote her. She moved towards him, hanging her head, and said, with inimitable sweetness and tenderness, "Here is a culprit come to try and appease you."

There came a time when he could hardly think of these words, and her penitent, submissive manner, with dry eyes. But just then his black dog had bitten him, and he said sullenly, "Oh, never mind me; it was always so. Your sex have always made me smart for — If flying from my house, before you are half recovered, gives you half the pleasure it gives me pain and mortification, say no more about it."

"Ah! why say it gives me pleasure? My friend, you cannot really think so."

"I don't know what to think. You ladies are all riddles."

"Then I must take you into my confidence, and, with some reluctance, I own, let you know why I leave this dear, kind roof to-day."

Vizard's generosity took the alarm. "No," he said, "I will not extort your reasons. It is a shame of me. Your bare will ought to be law in this house; and what reasons could reconcile me to losing you so suddenly? You are the joy of our eyes, the delight of our ears, the idol of all our hearts. You will leave us, and there will be darkness and gloom, instead of sunshine and song. Well, go; but you cannot soften the blow with reasons."

Mademoiselle Klosking flushed, and her bosom heaved; for this was a strong man greatly moved. With instinctive tact she saw the best way to bring him to his senses was to give him a good opening to retreat.

"Ah, monsieur," said she, "you are *trop grand seigneur.* You entertain a poor wounded singer in a chamber few princes can equal. You place everything at her disposal; such a physician and nurse as no queen can command; a choir to sing to her; royal sables to keep the wind from her, and ladies to wait on her. And, when you have brought her back to life, you say to yourself, She is a woman; she will not be thoroughly content unless we tell her she is adorable. So, out of politeness, you descend to the language of gallantry. This was not needed. I dispense with that kind of comfort. I leave your house because it is my duty, and leave it your grateful servant and true friend to my last hour."

She had opened the door, and V: ard could now escape. His obstinacy and his heart would not let him.

"Do not fence with me," said he. "Leave that to others. It is beneath *you.* If you had been content to stay, I would have been content to show my heart by halves. But, when you offer to leave me, you draw from me an avowal I can no longer restrain, and you must and shall listen to it. When I saw you on the stage at Homburg, I admired you, and loved you that very night. But I knew from experience how seldom in women outward graces go with the virtues of the soul. I distrusted my judgment. I feared you, and I fled you. But our destiny brought you here; and when I held you, pale and wounded, in my very arms, my heart seemed to go out of my bosom."

"Oh, no more! no more, pray!" cried Mademoiselle Klosking.

But the current of love was not to be stemmed. "Since that terrible hour I have been in heaven, watching your gradual and sure recovery; but you have recovered only to abandon me, and your hurry to leave me drives me to desperation. No, I cannot part with you. You must

not leave me, either this day or any day. Give me your hand, and stay here forever, and be the queen of my heart and of my house."

For some time La Klosking had lost her usual composure. Her bosom heaved tumultuously, and her hands trembled. But at this distinct proposal the whole woman changed. She drew herself up, with her pale cheek flushing, and her eyes glittering.

"What, sir?" said she. "Have you read me so ill? Do you not know I would rather be the meanest drudge that goes on her knees and scrubs your floors, than be queen of your house, as you call it? Ah, Jesu, are all men alike, then; that he whom I have so revered, whose mother's songs I have sung to him, makes me a proposal dishonorable to me and to himself!"

"Dishonorable!" cried Vizard. "Why, what can any man offer to any woman more honorable than I offer you? I offer you my heart and my hand, and I say, Do not go, my darling. Stay here forever, and be my queen, my goddess, my wife!"

"YOUR WIFE?" She stared wildly at him. "Your wife? Am I dreaming, or are you?"

"Neither. Do you think I can be content with less than that? Ina, I adore you."

She put her hand to her head. "I know not who is to blame for this," said she, and she trembled visibly.

"I'll take the blame," said he gayly.

Said Ina very gravely, "You, who do me the honor to offer me your name, have you asked yourself seriously what has been the nature of my relation with Edward Severne?"

"No!" cried Vizard violently; "and I do not mean to. I see you despise him now; and I have my eyes and my senses to guide me in choosing a wife. I choose you — if you will have me."

She listened, then turned her moist eyes full upon him, and said to him, "This is the greatest honor ever befell me. I cannot take it."

"Not take it?"

"No; but that is my misfortune. Do not be mortified. You have no rival in my esteem. What shall I say, my friend? — at least I may call you that; if I explain now, I shall weep much, and lose my strength. What shall I do? I think — yes, that will be best — *you shall go with me to-day.*"

"To the end of the world!"

"Something tells me you will know all, and forgive me."

"Shall I take my bag?"

"You might take an evening dress, and some linen."

"Very well. I won't keep you a moment," said he; and went up stairs with great alacrity.

She went into the hall, with her eyes bent on the ground, and was immediately pinned by Rhoda Gale, whose piercing eye, and inquisitive finger on her pulse, soon discovered that she had gone through a trying scene. "This is a bad beginning of an imprudent journey," said she; "I have a great mind to countermand the carriage."

"No, no," said Ina; "I will sleep in the railway and recover myself."

The ladies now got into the carriage; Ashmead insisted on going upon the box; and Vizard soon appeared, and took his seat opposite Miss Gale and Mademoiselle Klosking. The latter whispered her doctress: "It would be wise of me not to speak much at present." La Gale communicated this to Vizard, and they drove along in dead silence. But they were naturally curious to know where they were going; so they held some communication with their eyes. They very soon found they were going to Taddington station.

Then came a doubt — were they going up or down?

That was soon resolved.

Mr. Ashmead had hired a saloon carriage for them, with couches and conveniences.

They entered it; and Mademoiselle Klosking said to Miss Gale, "It is necessary that I should sleep."

"You shall," said Miss Gale.

While she was arranging the pillows and things, La Klosking said to Vizard, "We artists learn to sleep when we have work to do. Without it I should not be strong enough this day." She said this in a half-apologetic tone, as one anxious not to give him any shadow of offence.

She was asleep in five minutes; and Miss Gale sat watching her at first, but presently joined Vizard at the other end, and they whispered together. Said she, "What becomes of the theory that women have no strength of will? There is Mademoiselle *Je le veux* in person. When she wants to sleep, she sleeps; and look at you and me — do you know where we are going?"

"No."

"No more do I. The motive power is that personification of divine repose there. How beautiful she is with her sweet lips parted, and her white teeth peeping, and her upper and lower lashes wedded! and how graceful!"

"She is a goddess," said Vizard; "I wish I had never seen her. Mark my words, she will give me the sorest heart of all."

"I hope not," said Rhoda very seriously.

Ina slept sweetly for nearly two hours, and all that time her friends could only guess where they were going.

At last the train stopped, for the sixth time, and Ashmead opened the door.

This worthy, who was entirely in command of the expedition, collected the luggage, including Vizard's bag, and deposited it at the station. He then introduced the party to a pair-horse fly, and mounted the box.

When they stopped at Bagley, Vizard suspected where they were going.

When he saw the direction the carriage took, he knew it, and turned very grave indeed.

He even regretted that he had put himself so blindly under the control of a woman. He cast searching glances at Mademoiselle Klosking to try and discover what on earth she was going to do. But her face was as impenetrable as marble. Still she never looked less likely to do anything rash or in bad taste. Quietness was the main characteristic of her face when not rippled over by a ravishing sweetness; but he had never seen her look so great and lofty and resolute as she looked now; a little stern, too, as one who had a great duty to do, and was inflexible as iron. When truly feminine features stiffen into marble like this, beauty is indeed imperial, and worthy of epic song; it rises beyond the wing of prose.

My reader is too intelligent not to divine that she was steeling herself to a terrible interview with Zoe Vizard — terrible, mainly on account of the anguish she knew she must inflict.

But we can rarely carry out our plans exactly as we trace them — unexpected circumstances derange them or expand them; and I will so far anticipate as to say that, in this case, a most unexpected turn of events took La Klosking by surprise.

Whether she proved equal to the occasion, these pages will show very soon.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Poikilus never left Taddington, only the "Swan." More than once he was within sight of Ashmead, unobserved. Once, indeed, that gentleman, who had a great respect for dignitaries, saluted him; for at that moment Poikilus happened to be a sleek dignitary of the Church of England. Poikilus, when quite himself, wore a mustache, and was sallow and lean as a weasel; but he shaved, and stuffed, and colored for the dean. Shovel-hat, portly walk, and green spectacles, did the rest. Grandfather Whitehead saluted. His reverence chuckled.

Poikilus kept Severne posted by letter and wire, as to many things that happened outside Vizard Court; but he could not divine the storm that was brewing inside Ina Klosking's room. Yet Severne defended himself exactly as he would have done had he known all. He and Zoe spent elysian hours, meeting twice a day in the shrubbery, and making love as if they were the only creatures in the world; but it was blind Elysium only to one of them — Severne was uneasy and alarmed the whole time.

His sagacity showed him it could not last, and there was always a creeping terror on him. Would not Uxmoor cause inquiries? Would he not be sure to tell Vizard? Would not Vizard come there to look after Zoe, or order her back to Vizard Court? Would not the Klosking get well, and interfere once more? He passed the time between heaven and hell; whenever he was not under the immediate spell of Zoe's presence, a sort of vague terror was always on him. He looked all round him wherever he went.

This terror, and his passion, which was now as violent as it was wicked, soon drove him to conceive desperate measures. But, by masterly self-government, he kept them two days to his own bosom. He felt it was too soon to raise a fresh and painful discussion with Zoe. He must let her drink unmixed delight, and get a taste for it; and then show her on what conditions alone it could be had forever.

It was on the third day after their reconciliation, she found him seated on a bench in the shrubbery, lost in thought, and looking very dejected. She was close to him before he noticed; then he sprang up, stared at her, and began to kiss her hands violently, and even her very dress.

"It is you," said he, "once more."

"Yes, dear," said Zoe, tenderly; "did you think I would not come?"

"I did not know whether you could come. I feel that my happiness cannot last long. And, Zoe dear, I have had a dream. I dreamed we were taken prisoners and carried to Vizard Court, and on the steps stood Vizard and Mademoiselle Klosking arm in arm; I believe they were man and wife. And you were taken out and led, weeping, into the house, and I was left there raging with agony. And then that lady put out her finger in a commanding way, and I was whirled away into utter darkness, and I heard you moan, and I fought, and dashed my head against the carriage, and I felt my heart burst, and my whole body filled with some cold liquid, and I went to sleep, and I heard a voice say, 'It is all over; his trouble is ended.' I was dead."

This narrative, and his deep dejection, set Zoe's tears flowing. "Poor Edward!" she sighed; "I would not survive you. But cheer up, dear; it was only a dream. We are not slaves. I am not dependent on any one. How can we be parted?"

"We shall, unless we use our opportunity, and make it impossible to part us. Zoe, do not slight my alarm and my misgivings; such warnings are prophetic. For heaven's sake, make one sacrifice more, and let us place our happiness beyond the reach of man."

"Only tell me how."

"There is but one way — marriage."

Zoe blushed high, and panted a little, but said nothing.

"Ah!" said he piteously, "I ask too much."

"How can you say that?" said Zoe. "Of course I shall marry you, dearest. What! do you think I could do what I *have* done, for anybody but my husband that is to be?"

"I was mad to think otherwise," said he; "but I am in low spirits, and full of misgivings. Oh, the comfort, the bliss, the peace of mind, the joy, if you would see our hazardous condition, and make all safe, by marrying me to-morrow!"

"To-morrow! Why, Edward, are you mad? How can we be married, so long as my brother is so prejudiced against you?"

"If we wait his consent, we are parted forever. He would forgive us after it — that is certain; but he would never consent. He is too much under the influence of his — of Mademoiselle Klosking."

"Indeed, I cannot hope he will consent beforehand," sighed Zoe; "but I have not the courage to defy him; and if I had, we could not marry all in a moment, like that. We should have to be cried in church."

"That is quite gone out, amongst ladies and gentlemen."

"Not in our family. Besides, even a special license takes time, I suppose. Oh, no, I could not be married in a clandestine, discreditable way. I am a Vizard, —

please remember that. Would you degrade the woman you honor with your choice?"

And her red cheeks and flashing eyes warned him to desist.

"God forbid!" said he. "If that is the alternative, I consent to lose her — and lose her I shall."

He then affected to dismiss the subject, and said, "Let me enjoy the hours that are left me. Much misery, or much bliss, can be condensed in a few days. I will enjoy the blessed time; and we will wait for the chapter of accidents that is sure to part us." Then he acted reckless happiness, and broke down at last.

She cried, but showed no sign of yielding. Her pride and self-respect were roused and on their defence.

The next day he came to her quietly sad. He seemed languid and listless, and to care for nothing. He was artful enough to tell her, on the information of Poikilus, that Vizard had hired the cathedral choir three times a week, to sing to his inamorata; and that he had driven her about Taddington, dressed, like a duchess, in a whole suit of sables.

At that word the girl turned pale.

He observed, and continued: "And it seems these sables are known throughout the county. There were several carriages in the town, and my informant heard a lady say they were Mrs. Vizard's sables, worth five hundred guineas, — a Russian princess gave them her."

"It is quite true," said Zoe. "His mother's sables! Is it possible?"

"They all say he is caught at last, and this is to be the next Mrs. Vizard."

"They may well say so, if he parades her in his mother's sables," said Zoe, and could not conceal her jealousy and her indignation. "I never dared so much as ask his permission to wear them," said she.

"And if you had, he would have told you the relics of a saint were not to be played with."

"That is just what he would have said, I do believe." The female heart was stung.

"Ah, well," said Severne, "I am sure I should not grudge him his happiness, if you would see things as he does, and be as brave as he is."

"Thank you," said Zoe. "Women cannot defy the world, as men do." Then, passionately, "Why do you torment me so? why do you urge me so? a poor girl, all alone, and far from advice. What on earth would you have me do?"

"Secure us against another separation, — unite us in bliss forever."

"And so I would if I could; you know I would. But it is impossible."

"No, Zoe, it is easy. There are two ways: we can reach Scotland in eight hours; and there, by a simple writing, and declaration before witnesses, we are man and wife."

"A Gretna Green marriage?"

"It is just as much a legal marriage as if a bishop married us at St. Paul's. However, we could follow it up immediately by marriage in a church, either in Scotland or the north of England. But there is another way; we can be married at Bagley, any day, before the registrar."

"Is that a marriage? a real marriage?"

"As real, as legal, as binding, as a wedding in St. Paul's."

"Nobody in this county has ever been married so. I should blush to be seen about after it."

"Our first happy year would not be passed in this country. We should go abroad for six months."

"Ay, fly from shame."

"On our return, we should be received with open arms by my own people in Huntingdonshire, until your people came round, as they always do."

He then showed her a letter, in which his pearl of a cousin said they would receive his wife with open arms, and make her as happy as they could. Uncle Tom was coming home from India, with two hundred thousand pounds; he was a confirmed old bachelor, and Edward his favorite, etc.

Zoe faltered a little; so then he pressed her hard with love, and entreaties, and promises, and even hysterical tears; then she began to cry, — a sure sign of yielding. "Give me time," she said; "give me time."

He groaned, and said there was no time to lose; otherwise he never would have urged her so.

For all that, she could not be drawn to a decision. She must think over such a step.

Next morning, at the usual time, he came to know his fate. But she did not appear. He waited an hour for her. She did not come. He began to rage and storm, and curse his folly for driving her so hard.

At last she came, and found him pale with anxiety, and looking utterly miserable. She told him she had passed a sleepless night, and her head had ached so in the morning, she could not move.

"My poor darling!" said he, "and I am the cause. Say no more about it, dear one. I see you do not love me as I love you, and I forgive you."

She smiled sadly at that, for she was surer of her own love than his.

Zoe had passed a night of torment and vacillation; and but for her brother having paraded Mademoiselle Klosking in his mother's sables, she would, I think, have held out. But this turned her a little against her brother; and, as he was the main obstacle to her union

with Severne, love and pity conquered. Yet still honor and pride had their say. "Edward," said she, "I love you with all my heart, and share your fears that accident may separate us. I will let you decide for both of us. But, before you decide, be warned of one thing. I am a girl no longer, but a woman, who has been distracted with many passions. If any slur rests on my fair name, deeply as I love you now, I shall abhor you then."

He turned pale, for her eye flashed dismay into his craven soul.

He said nothing, and she continued: "If you insist on this hasty, half-clandestine marriage, then I consent to this — I will go with you before the registrar, and I shall come back here directly. Next morning early we will start for Scotland, and be married that other way before witnesses. Then your fears will be at an end, for you believe in these marriages; only as I do not, — for I look on these *legal* marriages merely as solemn betrothals, — I shall be Miss Zoe Vizard, and expect you to treat me so, until I have been married in a church, like a lady."

"Of course you shall," said he, and overwhelmed her with expressions of gratitude, respect, and affection.

This soothed her troubled mind, and she let him take her hand, and pour his honeyed flatteries into her ear, as he walked her slowly up and down.

She could hardly tear herself away from the soft pressure of his hand and the fascination of his tongue, and she left him, more madly in love with him than ever, and ready to face anything but dishonor for him. She was to come out at twelve o'clock, and walk into Bagley with him to betroth herself to him, as she chose to consider it, before the stipendiary magistrate, who married couples in that way. Of the two marriages she had consented to, merely as preliminaries to a real mar-

riage, Zoe despised this the most; for the Scotch marriage was, at all events, ancient, and respectable lovers had been driven to it again and again.

She was behind her time, and Severne thought her courage had failed her after all; but no; at half-past twelve she came out, and walked briskly towards Bagley.

He was behind her, and followed her. She took his arm nervously. "Let me feel you all the way," she said, "to give me courage."

So they walked arm in arm; and, as they went, his courage secretly wavered; hers rose at every step.

About half a mile from the town they met a carriage and pair.

At sight of them a gentleman on the box tapped at the glass window and said, hurriedly, "Here they are *together*."

Mademoiselle Klosking said, "Stop the carriage;" then, pausing a little, "Mr. Vizard — on your word of honor, no violence."

The carriage was drawn up, Ashmead opened the door in a trice, and La Klosking, followed by Vizard, stepped out, and stood like a statue before Edward Severne and Zoe Vizard.

Severne dropped her arm directly, and was panic-stricken.

Zoe uttered a little scream at the sight of Vizard; but the next moment took fire at her rival's audacity, and stepped boldly before her lover with flashing eyes and expanding nostrils that literally breathed defiance.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"You infernal scoundrel!" roared Vizard, and took a stride towards Severne.

"No violence," said Ina Klosking, sternly; "it will be an insult to this lady and me."

"Very well, then," said Vizard, grimly. "I must wait till I catch him alone."

"Meantime, permit me to speak, sir," said Ina. "Believe me, I have a better right than even you."

"Then, pray ask my sister why I find her on that villain's arm."

"I should not answer her," said Zoe, haughtily. "But my brother I will. Harrington, all this vulgar abuse confirms me in my choice. I take his arm, because I have accepted his hand. I am going into Bagley with him to become his wife."

This announcement took away Vizard's breath for a moment, and Ina Klosking put in her word. "You cannot do that: pray be warned. He is leading you to infamy."

"Infamy! What! because he cannot give me a suit of sables? Infamy! because we prefer virtuous poverty to vice and wealth?"

"No, young lady," said Ina, coloring faintly at the taunt; "but because you could only be his paramour — not his wife. He is married already."

At these words, spoken with that power Ina Klosking could always command, Zoe Vizard turned ashy pale. But she fought on bravely. "Married? It is false! To whom?"

"To me."

"I thought so. Now, I know it is not true. He left you months before we ever knew him."

"Look at him. He does not say it is false."

Zoe turned on Severne, and at his face her own heart quaked. "Are you married to this lady?" she asked; and her eyes, dilated to their full size, searched his every feature.

"Not that I know of," said he, impudently.

"Is that the serious answer you expected, Miss Vizard?" said Ina, keenly; then to Severne: "You are unwise to insult the woman on whom, from this day, you must depend for bread. Miss Vizard, to you I speak, and not to this shameless man. For your mother's sake, do me justice. I have loved him dearly; but now I abhor him. Would I could break the tie that binds us, and give him to you, or to any lady who would have him. But I cannot. And shall I hold my tongue, and let you be ruined and dishonored? I am an older woman than you, and bound by gratitude to all your house. Dear lady, I have taxed my strength to save you. I feel that strength waning. Pray read this paper, and consent to save *yourself*."

"I will read it," said Rhoda Gale, interfering. "I know German. It is an authorized duplicate, certifying the marriage of Edward Severne of Willingham in Huntingdonshire, England, to Ina Ferris, daughter of Walter Ferris and Eva Klosking, of Zutzig, in Denmark. The marriage was solemnized at Berlin, and here are the signatures of several witnesses: Eva Klosking; Fräulein Graafe; Zug, the Capellmeister; Vicomte Meurice, French *attaché;* Count Hompesch, Bavarian plenipotentiary; Herr Formes."

Ina explained, in a voice that was now feeble, "I was a public character; my marriage was public: not like

the clandestine union which is all he dared offer to this well-born lady."

"The Bavarian and French ministers are both in London," said Vizard, eagerly. "We can easily learn if these signatures are forged, like *your* acceptances."

But, if one shadow of doubt remained, Severne now removed it: he uttered a scream of agony, and fled, as if the demons of remorse and despair were spurring him with red-hot rowels.

"There, you little idiot!" roared Vizard, "does that open your eyes?"

"O Mr. Vizard!" said Ina, reproachfully, "for pity's sake, think only of her youth, and what she has to suffer. I can do no more for her: I feel — so — faint."

Ashmead and Rhoda supported her into the carriage; Vizard, touched to the heart by Ina's appeal, held out his eloquent arms to his stricken sister, and she tottered to him, and clung to him, all limp and broken, and wishing she could sink out of the sight of all mankind. He put his strong arm round her, and, though his own heart was desolate and broken, he supported that broken flower of womanhood, and half led, half lifted her on, until he laid her on a sofa in Somerville Villa. Then, for the first time, he spoke to her. "We are both desolate now, my child. Let us love one another. I will be ten times tenderer to you than I ever have been." She gave a great sob, but she was past speaking.

Ina Klosking, Miss Gale, and Ashmead returned in the carriage to Bagley. Half a mile out of the town, they found a man lying on the pathway, with his hat off, and white as a sheet. It was Edward Severne. He had run till he dropped.

Ashmead got down, and examined him.

He came back to the carriage-door, looking white enough himself. "It is all over," said he; "the man is dead."

Miss Gale was out in a moment, and examined him. "No," said she; "the heart does not beat perceptibly; but he breathes. It is another of those seizures. Help me get him into the carriage."

This was done, and the driver ordered to go a foot-pace.

The stimulants Miss Gale had brought for Ina Klosking were now applied to revive this malefactor; and both ladies actually ministered to him with compassionate faces. He was a villain; but he was superlatively handsome, and a feather might turn the scale of life or death.

The seizure, though really appalling to look at, did not last long. He revived a little in the carriage, and was taken, still insensible, but breathing hard, into a room in the railway hotel. When he was out of danger, Miss Gale felt Ina Klosking's pulse, and insisted on her going to Taddington by the next train, and leaving Severne to the care of Mr. Ashmead.

Ina, who, in truth, was just then most unfit for any more trials, feebly consented, but not until she had given Ashmead some important instructions respecting her malefactor, and supplied him with funds. Miss Gale also instructed Ashmead how to proceed in case of a relapse, and provided him with materials.

The ladies took a train, which arrived soon after; and, being so fortunate as to get a ladies' carriage all to themselves, they sat intertwined and rocking together, and Ina Klosking found relief at last in a copious flow of tears.

Rhoda got her to Hillstoke, cooked for her, nursed her, lighted fires, aired her bed, and these two friends slept together in each other's arms.

Ashmead had a hard time of it with Severne; he managed pretty well with him at first, because he stupefied him with brandy before he had come to his senses,

and in that state got him into the next train. But, as the fumes wore off, and Severne realized his villany, his defeat, and his abject condition between the two women he had wronged, he suddenly uttered a yell, and made a spring at the window. Ashmead caught him by his calves, and dragged him so powerfully down, that his face struck the floor hard, and his nose bled profusely. The hemorrhage and the blow quieted him for a time, and then Ashmead gave him more brandy, and got him to the "Swan," in a half-lethargic lull. This faithful agent and man-of-all-work took a private sitting-room with a double-bedded room adjoining it, and ordered a hot supper with champagne and madeira.

Severne lay on a sofa, moaning.

The waiter stared. "Trouble!" whispered Ashmead, confidentially. "Take no notice. Supper as quick as possible."

By and by Severne started up, and began to rave and tear about the room, cursing his hard fate, and ended in a kind of hysterical fit. Ashmead, being provided by Miss Gale with salts and aromatic vinegar, etc., applied them, and ended by dashing a tumbler of water right into his face, which did him more good than chemistry.

Then he tried to awak n manhood in the fellow. "What are *you* howling about?" said he. "Why, you are the only sinner, and you are the least sufferer. Come, drop snivelling, and eat a bit. Trouble don't do on an empty stomach."

Severne said he would try; but begged the waiter might not be allowed to stare at a broken-hearted man.

"Broken fiddlestick!" said honest Joe.

Severne tried to eat, but could not. But he could drink, and said so.

Ashmead gave him champagne in tumblers, and that, on his empty stomach, set him raving, and saying life

was hell to him now. But presently he fell to weeping bitterly, in which condition Ashmead forced him to bed, and there he slept heavily. In the morning Ashmead sat by his bedside, and tried to bring him to reason. "Now look here," said he, "you are a lucky fellow, if you will only see it. You have escaped bigamy and a jail, and as a reward for your good conduct to your wife, and the many virtues you have exhibited in a short space of time, I am instructed by that lady to pay you twenty pounds every Saturday at twelve o'clock. It is only a thousand a year: but don't you be down-hearted; I conclude she will raise your salary as you advance. You must forge her name to a heavy check, rob a church, and abduct a school-girl or two — misses in their teens and wards of chancery preferred — and she will make it thirty, no doubt;" and Joe looked very sour.

"That for her twenty pounds a week!" cried this injured man. "She owes me two thousand pounds and more. She has been my enemy, and her own. The fool! — to go and peach! She had only to hold her tongue and be Mrs. Vizard, and then she would have had a rich husband, that adores her, and I should have had my darling, beautiful Zoe, the only woman I ever loved or ever shall."

"Oh," said Ashmead, "then you expected your wife to commit bigamy, and so make it smooth to you?"

"*Of course I did,*" was the worthy Severne's reply; "and so she would, if she had had a grain of sense. See what a contrast now! We are all unhappy, — herself included, — and it is all her doing."

"Well, young man," said Ashmead, drawing a long breath; "didn't I tell you you are a lucky fellow? You have got twenty pounds a week, and that blest boon, 'a conscience void of offence.' You are a happy man. Here's a strong cup of tea for you: just you drink it,

and then get up and take the train to the little village. There kindred spirits and fresh delights await you. You are not to adorn Barfordshire any longer — that is the order."

"Well, I'll go to London — but not without you."

"Me! What do you want of *me?*"

"You are a good fellow, and the only friend I have left. But for you I should be dead or mad. You have pulled me through."

"Through the window I did. Lord forgive me for it," said Joseph. "Well, I'll go up to town with you; but I can't be always tied to your tail. I haven't got twenty pounds a week. To be sure," he added, dryly, "I haven't earned it. That is one comfort."

He telegraphed to Hillstoke, and took Severne up to London.

There the Bohemian very soon found he could live, and even derive some little enjoyment — from his vices — without Joseph Ashmead. He visited him punctually every Saturday, and conversed delightfully. If he came any other day, it was sure to be for an advance: he never got it.

CHAPTER XXX.

Fanny Dover was sent for directly to Somerville Villa; and three days after the distressing scene I have endeavored to describe, Vizard brought his wrecked sister home. Her condition was pitiable: and the moment he reached Vizard Court, he mounted his horse, and rode to Hillstoke to bring Miss Gale down to her.

There he found Ina Klosking, with her boxes at the door, waiting for the fly that was to take her away.

It was a sad interview. He thanked her deeply for her noble conduct to his sister, and then he could not help speaking of his own disappointment.

Mademoiselle Klosking, on this occasion, was simple, sad, and even tender, within prudent limits. She treated this as a parting forever, and therefore made no secret of her esteem for him. "But," said she, "I hope one day to hear you have found a partner worthy of you. As for me, who am tied for life to one I despise, and can never love again, I shall seek my consolation in music, and, please God, in charitable actions."

He kissed her hand at parting, and gave her a long, long look of miserable regret, that tried her composure hard, and often recurred to her memory.

She went up to London; took a small suburban house; led a secluded life, and devoted herself to her art, making a particular study now of sacred music; she collected volumes of it, and did not disdain to buy it at bookstalls, or wherever she could find it.

Ashmead worked for her, and she made her first appearance in a new oratorio. Her songs proved a principal feature in the performance.

Events did not stand still in Barfordshire; but they were tame compared with those I have lately related, and must be despatched in fewer words.

Aunt Maitland recovered unexpectedly from a severe illness, and was a softened woman: she sent Fanny off to keep Zoe company. That poor girl had a bitter time, and gave Doctress Gale great anxiety. She had no brain-fever, but seemed quietly, insensibly, sinking into her grave. No appetite, and indeed was threatened with atrophy at one time. But she was so surrounded with loving-kindness that her shame diminished, her pride rose, and at last her agony was blunted, and only a pensive languor remained to show that she had been crushed, and could not be again the bright, proud, high-spirited beauty of Barfordshire.

For many months she never mentioned either Edward Severne, Ina Klosking, or Lord Uxmoor.

It was a long time before she went outside the gates of her own park. She seemed to hate the outer world.

Her first visit was to Miss Gale; that young lady was now very happy. She had her mother with her. Mrs. Gale had defeated the tricky executor, and had come to England with a tidy little capital, saved out of the fire by her sagacity and spirit.

Mrs. Gale's character has been partly revealed by her daughter. I have only to add she was a homely, well-read woman, of few words, but those few — grape-shot. Example — she said to Zoe, "Young lady, excuse an old woman's freedom, who might be your mother: the troubles of young folk have a deal of self in them; more than you could believe. Now just you try something to take you out of self, and you will be another creature."

"Ah," sighed Zoe, "would to heaven I could!"

"Oh," said Mrs. Gale, "anybody with money can do

it, and the world so full of real trouble. Now, my girl tells me you are kind to the poor: why not do something like Rhoda is doing for this lord she is overseer, or goodness knows what, to?"

Rhoda (*defiantly*), "Viceroy."

"You have money, and your brother will not refuse you a bit o' land. Why not build some of these new-fangled cottages, with fancy gardens, and dwarf palaces for a cow and a pig? Rhoda, child, if I was a poor woman, I could graze a cow in the lanes hereabouts, and feed a pig in the woods. Now you do that for the poor, Miss Vizard, and don't let my girl think for you. Breed your own ideas. That will divert you from self, my dear, and you will begin to find it — there — just as if a black cloud was clearing away from your mind, and letting your heart warm again."

Zoe caught at the idea, and that very day asked Vizard timidly, whether he would let her have some land to build a model cottage or two on?

Will it be believed that the good-natured Vizard made a wry face? "What! two proprietors in Islip." For a moment or two he was all squire. But soon the brother conquered. "Well," said he, "I can't give you a fee-simple; I must think of my heirs: but I will hold a court, and grant you a copyhold; or I'll give you a ninety-nine years' lease at a peppercorn. There's a slip of three acres on the edge of the Green. You shall amuse yourself with that." He made it over to her directly, for a century, at ten shillings a year; and, as he was her surviving trustee, he let her draw in advance on her ten thousand pounds.

Mapping out the ground with Rhoda, settling the gardens, and the miniature pastures, and planning the little houses and out-houses, and talking a great deal, compared with what she transacted, proved really a certain

antidote to that lethargy of woe which oppressed her: and here, for a time, I must leave her, returning slowly to health of body, and some tranquillity of mind; but still subject to fits of shame, and gnawed by bitter regrets.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The reputation Mademoiselle Klosking gained in the new oratorio, aided by Ashmead's exertions, launched her in a walk of art that accorded with her sentiments.

She sang in the oratorio whenever it could be performed, and also sang select songs from it, and other sacred songs, at concerts.

She was engaged at a musical festival in the very cathedral town whose choir had been so consoling to her. She entered with great zeal into this engagement, and finding there was a general desire to introduce the leading chorister boy to the public in a duet, she surprised them all by offering to sing the second part with him, if he would rehearse it carefully with her at her lodgings. He was only too glad, as might be supposed. She found he had a lovely voice, but little physical culture. He read correctly, but did not even know the nature of the vocal instrument and its construction, which is that of a bagpipe. She taught him how to keep his lungs full in singing, yet not to gasp, and by this simple means enabled him to sing with more than twice the power he had ever exercised yet. She also taught him the swell, a figure of music he knew literally nothing about.

When, after singing a great solo, to salvos of applause, Mademoiselle Klosking took the second part with this urchin, the citizens and all the musical people who haunt a cathedral, were on the tiptoe of expectation. The boy amazed them, and the rich contralto that supported him, and rose and swelled with him in ravishing harmony, enchanted them. The vast improvement in the boy's

style did not escape the hundreds of persons who knew him, and this duet gave La Klosking a great personal popularity.

Her last song, by her own choice, was, "What though I trace" (Handel), and the majestic volume that rang through the echoing vault showed with what a generous spirit she had subdued that magnificent organ not to crush her juvenile partner in the preceding duet.

Amongst the persons present was Harrington Vizard. He had come there against his judgment; but he could not help it.

He had been cultivating a dull tranquillity, and was even beginning his old game of railing on women, as the great disturbers of male peace. At the sight of her, and the sound of her first notes, away went his tranquillity, and he loved her as ardently as ever. But, when she sang his mother's favorite, and the very roof rang, and three thousand souls were thrilled and lifted to heaven by that pure and noble strain, the rapture could not pass away from this one heart; while the ear ached at the cessation of her voice, the heart also ached, and pined, and yearned.

He ceased to resist. From that day he followed her about to her public performances all over the midland counties; and she soon became aware of his presence. She said nothing till Ashmead drew her attention; then, being compelled to notice it, she said it was a great pity. Surely he must have more important duties at home.

Ashmead wanted to recognize him, and put him into the best place vacant; but La Klosking said, "No; I will be more his friend than to lend him the least encouragement."

At the end of that tour she returned to London.

While she was there in her little suburban house, she received a visit from Mr. Edward Severne. He came

to throw himself at her feet, and beg forgiveness. She said she would try and forgive him. He then implored her to forget the past. She told him that was beyond her power. He persisted, and told her he had come to his senses; all his misconduct now seemed a hideous dream, and he found he had never really loved any one but her. So then he entreated her to try him once more; to give him back the treasure of her love.

She listened to him like a woman of marble. "Love where I despise!" said she. "Never. The day has gone by when these words can move me. Come to me for the means of enjoying yourself — gambling, drinking, and your other vices — and I shall indulge you. But do not profane the name of love. I forbid you ever to enter my door on that errand. I presume you want money. There is a hundred pounds. Take it; and keep out of my sight till you have wasted it."

He dashed the notes proudly down. She turned her back on him, and glided into another room.

When she returned he was gone, and the hundred pounds had managed to accompany him.

He went straight from her to Ashmead, and talked big. He would sue for restitution of conjugal rights.

"Don't do that, for my sake," said Ashmead. "She will fly the country like a bird, and live in some village on bread and milk."

"Oh, I would not do *you* an ill turn for the world," said the master of arts. "You have been a kind friend to me. You saved my life. It is imbittered by remorse and recollections of the happiness I have thrown away, and the heart I have wronged. No matter!"

This visit disturbed La Klosking, and disposed her to leave London. She listened to a brilliant offer that was made her, through Ashmead, by the manager of the Italian Opera, who was organizing a provincial tour.

The tour was well advertised in advance, and the company opened to a grand house at Birmingham.

Mademoiselle Klosking had not been long on the stage, when she discovered her discarded husband in the stalls, looking the perfection of youthful beauty. The next minute she saw Vizard in a private box. Mr. Severne applauded her loudly, and flung her a bouquet. Mr. Vizard fixed his eyes on her, beaming with admiration, but made no public demonstration.

The same incident repeated itself every night she sang, and at every town.

At last she spoke about it to Ashmead, in the vague, suggestive way her sex excels in. "I presume you have observed the people in front?"

"Yes, madam. Two in particular."

"Could you not advise him to desist?"

"Which of 'em, madam?"

"Mr. Vizard, of course. He is losing his time, and wasting sentiments it is cruel should be wasted."

Ashmead said he dared not take any liberty with Mr. Vizard.

So the thing went on.

Severne made acquaintance with the manager, and obtained the *entrée* behind the scenes. He brought his wife a bouquet every night, and presented it to her with such reverence and grace, that she was obliged to take it and courtesy, or seem rude to the people about.

Then she wrote to Miss Gale, and begged her to come, if she could.

Miss Gale, who had all this time been writing her love-letters twice a week, immediately appointed her mother viceroy, and went to her friend. Ina Klosking explained the situation to her with a certain slight timidity and confusion not usual to her; and said, "Now, dear, you have more courage than the rest of us; and I know he

has a great respect for you; and, indeed, Miss Dover told me he would quite obey you. Would it not be the act of a friend to advise him to cease this unhappy — What good can come of it? He neglects his own duties, and disturbs me in mine. I sometimes ask myself would it not be kinder of me to give up my business, or practice it elsewhere — Germany, or even Italy?"

"Does he call on you?"

"No."

"Does he write to you?"

"Oh no — I wish he would; because then I should be able to reply like a true friend, and send him away. Consider, dear, it is not like a nobody dangling after a public singer; that is common enough. We are all run after by idle men; even Signorina Zubetta, who has not much voice, nor appearance, and speaks a Genoese *patois* when she is not delivering a libretto. But for a gentleman of position, with a heart of gold, and the soul of an emperor, that he should waste his time and his feelings so, on a woman who can never be anything to him, it is pitiable."

"Well, but after all it is his business; and he is not a child: besides, remember he is really very fond of music. If I were you, I'd look another way, and take no notice."

"But I cannot."

"Ah! — And why not, pray?"

"Because he always takes a box on my left hand, two from the stage. I can't think how he gets it at all the theatres. And then he fixes his eyes on me so, I cannot help stealing a look. He never applauds, nor throws me bouquets. He looks; oh, you cannot conceive how he looks, and the strange effect it is beginning to produce on me!"

"He mesmerizes you?"

"I know not; but it is a growing fascination. Oh, my

dear physician, interfere. If it goes on, we shall be more wretched than ever." Then she enveloped Rhoda in her arms, and rested a hot cheek against hers.

"I see," said Rhoda. "You are afraid he will make you love him."

"I hope not. But artists are impressionable; and being looked at so, by one I esteem, night after night when my nerves are strung — *cela m'agace;*" and she gave a shiver, and then was a little hysterical; and that was very unlike her.

Rhoda kissed her, and said resolutely she would stop it.

"Not unkindly?"

"Oh, no."

"You will not tell him it is offensive to me?"

"No."

"Pray do not give him unnecessary pain."

"No."

"He is not to be mortified."

"No."

"I shall miss him sadly."

"Shall you?"

"Naturally; especially at each new place. Only conceive: — one is always anxious on the stage; and it is one thing to come before a public all strangers, and nearly all poor judges; it is another to see, all ready for your first note, a noble face bright with intelligence and admiration — the face of a friend. Often that one face is the only one I allow myself to see. It hides the whole public."

"Then don't you be silly and send it away. I'll tell you the one fault of your character: you think too much of other people, and too little of yourself. Now that is contrary to the scheme of nature. We are sent into the world to take care of number one."

"What?" said Ina; "are we to be all self-indulgence?

Is there to be no principle, no womanly prudence, foresight, discretion? No: I feel the sacrifice; but no power shall hinder me from making it. If you cannot persuade him, I'll do like other singers. I will be ill, and quit the company."

"Don't do that," said Rhoda. "Now you have put on your iron look, it is no use arguing — I know that to my cost. There — I will talk to him. Only don't hurry me; let me take my opportunity."

This being understood, Ina would not part with her for the present, but took her to the theatre. She dismissed her dresser, at Rhoda's request, and Rhoda filled that office. So they could talk freely.

Rhoda had never been behind the scenes of a theatre before, and she went prying about, ignoring the music, for she was almost earless. Presently, whom should she encounter but Edward Severne? She started, and looked at him like a basilisk. He removed his hat, and drew back a step with a great air of respect and humility. She was shocked and indignant with Ina for letting him be about her. She followed her off the stage into her dressing-room, and took her to task. "I have seen Mr. Severne here."

"He comes every night."

"And you allow him?"

"It is the manager."

"But he would not admit him, if you objected."

"I am afraid to do that."

"Why?"

"We should have an *esclandre*. I find he has had so much consideration for me as to tell no one our relation; and as he has never spoken to me, I do the most prudent thing I can, and take no notice. Should he attempt to intrude himself on me, then it will be time to have him stopped in the hall, and I shall do it *coûte que coûte*.

Ah, my dear friend, mine is a difficult and trying position."

After a very long wait, Ina went down and sang her principal song, with the usual bravas and thunders of applause. She was called on twice, and as she retired, Severne stepped forward, and, with a low, obsequious bow, handed her a beautiful bouquet. She took it with a stately courtesy, but never looked nor smiled. Rhoda saw that and wondered. She thought to herself, "That is carrying politeness a long way. To be sure, she is half a foreigner."

Having done his nightly homage, Severne left the theatre, and soon afterwards the performance concluded, and Ina took her friend home.

Ashmead was in the hall to show his patroness to her carriage — a duty he never failed in. Rhoda shook hands with him, and he said, "Delighted to see you here, miss. You will be a great comfort to her."

The two friends communed till two o'clock in the morning; but the limits of my tale forbid me to repeat what passed. Suffice it to say that Rhoda was fairly puzzled by the situation; but, having a great regard for Vizard, saw clearly enough that he ought to be sent back to Islip. She thought that perhaps the very sight of her would wound his pride, and, finding his mania discovered by a third person, he would go of his own accord: so she called on him.

My lord received her with friendly composure, and all his talk was about Islip. He did not condescend to explain his presence at Carlisle. He knew that *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, and left her to remonstrate. She had hardly courage for that, and hoped it might be unnecessary.

She told Ina what she had done. But her visit was futile; at night there was Vizard in his box.

Next day the company opened in Manchester. Vizard

was in his box there — Severne in front, till Ina's principal song. Then he came round and presented his bouquet. But this time he came up to Rhoda Gale, and asked her whether a penitent man might pay his respects to her in the morning.

She said she believed there were very few penitents in the world.

"I know one," said he.

"Well, I don't, then," said the virago. "But *you* can come, if you are not afraid."

Of course Ina Klosking knew of this appointment two minutes after it was made. She merely said, "Do not let him talk you over."

"He is not so likely to talk me over as you," said Rhoda.

"You are mistaken," was Ina's reply. "I am the one person he will never deceive again."

Rhoda Gale received his visit: he did not beat about the bush, nor fence at all. He declared at once what he came for. He said, "At the first sight of you, whom I have been so ungrateful to, I could not speak; but now I throw myself on your forgiveness. I think you must have seen that my ingratitude has never sat light on me."

"I have seen that you were terribly afraid of me," said she.

"I dare say I was. But I am not afraid of you now; and here, on my knees, I implore you to forgive my baseness, my ingratitude. Oh, Miss Gale, you don't know what it is to be madly in love; one has no principle, no right feeling, against a real passion: and I was madly in love with her. It was through fear of losing her I disowned my physician, my benefactress, who had saved my life. Miserable wretch! It was through fear of losing her that I behaved like a ruffian to my angel wife, and would have committed bigamy, and been a

felon. What was all this but madness? You, who are so wise, will you not forgive me a crime that downright insanity was the cause of?"

"Humph! if I understand right, you wish me to forgive you for looking in my face, and saying to the woman who had saved your life, 'I don't know you'?"

"Yes — if you can. No: now you put it in plain words, I see it is not to be forgiven."

"You are mistaken. It was like a stab to my heart, and I cried bitterly over it."

"Then I deserve to be hanged, that is all."

"But, on consideration, I believe it is as much your nature to be wicked, as it is my angel Ina's to be good. So I forgive you that one thing, you charming villain." She held out her hand to him in proof of her good faith.

He threw himself on his knees directly, and kissed and mumbled her hand, and bedewed it with hysterical tears.

"Oh, don't do that," said she; "or I'm bound to give you a good kick. I hate she-men."

"Give me a moment," said he, "and I will be a man again."

He sat with his face in his hands, gulping a little.

"Come," said she, cocking her head like a keen jackdaw; "now let us have the real object of your visit."

"No, no," said he, inadvertently — "another time will do for that. I am content with your forgiveness. Now I can wait."

"What for?"

"Can you ask? Do you consider this a happy state of things?"

"Certainly not. But it can't be helped: and we have to thank you for it."

"It could be helped, in time. If you would persuade her to take the first step."

"What step?"

"Not to disown her husband. To let him at least be her friend — her penitent, humble friend. We *are* man and wife. If I were to say so publicly, she would admit it. In this respect at least I have been generous: will she not be generous too? What harm could it do her if we lived under the same roof, and I took her to the theatre, and fetched her home, and did little friendly offices for her?"

"And so got the thin edge of the wedge in, eh? Mr. Severne, I decline all interference in a matter so delicate, and in favor of a person who would use her as ill as ever, if he once succeeded in recovering her affections."

So then she dismissed him peremptorily.

But, true to Vizard's interest, she called on him again, and, after a few preliminaries, let him know that Severne was every night behind the scenes.

A spasm crossed his face. "I am quite aware of that," said he. "But he is never admitted into her house."

"How do you know?"

"He is under constant surveillance."

"Spies?"

"No — thief-takers; all from Scotland Yard."

"And love brings men down to this. What is it for?"

"When I am sure of your co-operation, I will let you know my hopes."

"He doubts my friendship," said Rhoda, sorrowfully.

"No; only your discretion."

"I will be discreet."

"Well, then, sooner or later, he is sure to form some improper connection or other; and then I hope you will aid me in persuading her to divorce him."

"That is not so easy in this country. It is not like our Western States, where, the saying is, they give you five minutes at a railway station for dī—vorce."

"You forget she is a German Protestant, and the marriage was in that country. It will be easy enough."

"Very well; dismiss it from your mind. She will never come before the public in that way. Nothing you nor I could urge would induce her."

Vizard replied, doggedly, "I will never despair, so long as she keeps him out of her house."

Rhoda told Ina Klosking this, and said, "Now it is in your own hands. You have only to let your charming villain into your house, and Mr. Vizard will return to Islip."

Ina Klosking buried her face in her hands, and thought.

At night, Vizard in his box, as usual. Severne behind the scenes with his bouquet. But this night he stayed for the ballet, to see a French *danseuse* who had joined them. He was acquainted with her before, and had a sprightly conversation with her. In other words, he renewed an old flirtation.

The next opera night all went as usual. Vizard in the box, looking sadder than usual. Rhoda's good sense had not been entirely wasted. Severne, with his bouquet, and his grave humility, until the play ended, and La Klosking passed out into the hall. Her back was hardly turned, when Mlle. Lafontaine, dressed for the ballet, in a most spicy costume, danced up to her old friend, and slapped his face very softly with a rose, then sprang away, and stood on her defence.

"I'll have that rose," cried Severne.

"*Nenni.*"

"And a kiss into the bargain."

"*Jamais.*"

"C'est ce que nous verrons."

He chased her. She uttered a feigned "Ah!" and darted away. He followed her; she crossed the scene at the back, where it was dark, bounded over an open trap,

which she saw just in time, but Severne, not seeing it, because she was between him and it, fell through it, and striking the mazarine, fell into the cellar, fifteen feet below the stage.

The screams of the dancer soon brought a crowd round the trap, and reached Mademoiselle Klosking just as she was going out to her carriage. "There!" she cried: "another accident!" and she came back, making sure it was some poor carpenter come to grief, as usual. On such occasions her purse was always ready.

They brought Severne up sensible, but moaning, and bleeding at the temple, and looking all streaky about the face.

They were going to take him to the infirmary; but Mademoiselle Klosking, with a face of angelic pity, said, "No; he bleeds, he bleeds. He must go to my house."

They stared a little; but it takes a good deal to astonish people in a theatre.

Severne was carried out, his head hastily bandaged, and he was lifted into La Klosking's carriage. One of the people of the theatre was directed to go on the box, and La Klosking and Ashmead supported him, and he was taken to her lodgings. She directed him to be laid on a couch, and a physician sent for, Miss Gale not having yet returned from Liverpool, whither she had gone to attend a lecture.

Ashmead went for the physician. But almost at the door he met Miss Gale and Mr. Vizard.

"Miss," said he, "you are wanted. There has been an accident. Mr. Severne has fallen through a trap, and into the cellar."

"No bones broken?"

"Not he: he has only broken his head; and that will cost her a broken heart."

"Where is he?"

"Where I hoped never to see him again."

"What! in her house?" said Rhoda, and hurried off at once.

"Mr. Ashmead," said Vizard, "a word with you."

"By all means, sir," said Ashmead, "as we go for the doctor. Dr. Menteith has a great name. He lives close by your hotel, sir."

As they went Vizard asked him what he meant by saying this incident would cost her a broken heart.

"Why, sir," said Ashmead, "he is on his good behavior to get back; has been for months begging and praying just to be let live under the same roof. She has always refused. But some fellows have such luck. I don't say he fell down a trap on purpose; but he has done it, and no broken bones, but plenty of blood. That is the very thing to overcome a woman's feelings; and she is not proof against pity. He will have her again. Why, she is his nurse now; and see how that will work. We have a week's more business here; and, by bad luck, a dead fortnight, all along of Dublin falling through unexpectedly. He is as artful as Old Nick; he will spin out that broken head of his, and make it last all the three weeks; and she will nurse him, and he will be weak, and grateful, and cry, and beg her pardon six times a day; and she is only a woman, after all; and they are man and wife, when all is done: the road is beaten. They will run upon it again, till his time is up to play the rogue as bad as ever."

"You torture me," said Vizard.

"I am afraid I do, sir; but I feel it my duty. Mr. Vizard, you are a noble gentleman, and I am only what you see; but the humblest folk will have their likes and dislikes, and I have a great respect for you, sir. I can't tell you the mixture of things I feel when I see you in the same box every night. Of course I am her agent,

and the house would not be complete without you; but as a man I am sorry — especially now that she has let him into her house. Take a humble friend's advice, sir, and cut it. Don't you come between any woman and her husband, especially a public lady. She will never be more to you than she is. She is a good woman, and he must keep gaining ground. He has got the pull. Rouse all your pride, sir, and your manhood, and you have got plenty of both, and cut it; don't look right nor left, but cut it — and forgive my presumption."

Vizard was greatly moved. "Give me your hand," he said; "you are a worthy man. I'll act on your advice, and never forget what I owe you. Stick to me like a leech, and see me off by the next train, for I am going to tear my heart out of my bosom."

Luckily there was a train in half an hour; and Ashmead saw him off; then went to supper. He did not return to Ina's lodgings. He did not want to see Severne nursed. He liked the fellow, too; but he saw through him clean; and he worshipped Ina Klosking.

CHAPTER XXXII.

At one o'clock next day, Ashmead received a note from Mademoiselle Klosking, saying, "Arrange with Mr. X. to close my tour with Manchester. Pay the fortnight if required." She was with the company at a month's notice on either side, you must understand.

Instead of going to the manager, he went at once, in utter dismay, to Mademoiselle Klosking, and there learned in substance what I must now briefly relate.

Miss Gale found Edward Severne deposited on a sofa. Ina was on her knees by his side, sponging his bleeding temple, with looks of gentle pity. Strange to say, the wound was in the same place as his wife's, but more contused, and no large vein was divided. Miss Gale soon stanched that. She asked him where his pain was. He said it was in his head and his back; and he cast a haggard, anxious look on her.

"Take my arm," said she. "Now, stand up."

He tried but could not, and said his legs were benumbed. Miss Gale looked grave.

"Lay him on my bed," said La Klosking. "That is better than these hard couches."

"You are right," said Miss Gale. "Ring for the servants. He must be moved gently."

He was carried in, and set upon the edge of the bed, and his coat and waistcoat taken off. Then he was laid gently down on the bed, and covered with a down quilt.

Doctress Gale then requested Ina to leave the room, while she questioned the patient.

Ina retired.

In a moment or two Miss Gale came out to her softly.

At sight of her face, La Klosking said, "Oh, dear, it is more serious than we thought."

"Very serious."

"Poor Edward!"

"Collect all your courage, for I cannot lie, either to patient or friend."

"And you are right," said La Klosking trembling. "I see he is in danger."

"Worse than that. Where there's danger there is hope; here there is none. HE IS A DEAD MAN!"

"Oh, no! no!"

"He has broken his back, and nothing can save him. His lower limbs have already lost sensation; death will creep over the rest. Do not disturb your mind with idle hopes. You have two things to thank God for — that you took him into your own house, and that he will die easily. Indeed, were he to suffer, I should stupefy him at once, for nothing can *hurt* him."

Ina Klosking turned faint, and her knees gave way under her. Rhoda ministered to her, and while she was so employed Dr. Menteith was announced. He was shown in to the patient, and the accident described to him. He questioned the patient, and examined him alone.

He then came out, and said he would draw a prescription. He did so.

"Doctor," said La Klosking, "tell me the truth. It cannot be worse than I fear."

"Madam," said the doctor, "medicine can do nothing for him. The spinal cord is divided. Give him anything he fancies, and my prescription if he suffers pain, not otherwise. Shall I send you a nurse?"

"No," said Mademoiselle Klosking, "*we* will nurse him night and day."

He retired, and the friends entered on their sad duties.

When Severne saw them both by his bedside, with earnest looks of pity, he said, "Do not worry yourselves, I'm booked for the long journey. Ah, well, I shall die where I ought to have lived, and might have, if I had not been a fool."

Ina wept bitterly.

They nursed him night and day. He suffered little, and when he did Miss Gale stupefied the pain at once; for, as she truly said, "nothing can hurt him." Vitality gradually retired to his head, and lingered there a whole day. But to his last moment the art of pleasing never abandoned him. Instead of worrying for this or that every moment, he showed in this desperate condition singular patience and well-bred fortitude. He checked his wife's tears; assured her it was all for the best, and that he was reconciled to the inevitable. "I have had a happier time than I deserved," said he; "and now I have a painless death, nursed by two sweet women. My only regret is that I shall not be able to repay your devotion, Ina, nor become worthy of your friendship, Miss Gale."

He died without fear, it being his conviction that he should return after death to the precise condition in which he was before birth; and when they begged him to see a clergyman, he said, "Pray do not give yourselves or him that trouble. I can melt back into the universe without his assistance."

He even died content; for this polished Bohemian had often foreseen that, if he lived long, he should die miserably.

But the main feature of his end was his extraordinary politeness. He paid Miss Gale compliments just as if he were at his ease on a sofa; and scarce an hour before his decease he said faintly, "I declare — I have been so busy — dying — I have forgotten to send my kind regards

to good Mr. Ashmead. Pray tell him I did not forget his kindness to me."

He just ceased to live, so quiet was his death, and a smile rested on his dead features, and they were as beautiful as ever.

So ended a fair, pernicious creature, endowed too richly with the art of pleasing, and quite devoid of principle. Few bad men knew right so well, and went so wrong.

Ina buried her face for hours on his bed, and kissed his cold features and hand. She had told him before he died she would recall all her resolutions, if he would live. But he was gone. Death buries a man's many faults, and his few virtues rise again. She mourned him sincerely, and would not be comforted; she purchased a burying place forever, and laid him in it; then she took her aching heart far away, and was lost to the public and to all her English friends.

The faithful Rhoda accompanied her half-way to London, then returned to her own duties in Barfordshire.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

I MUST now retrograde a little, to relate something rather curious, and I hope not uninteresting.

Zoe Vizard had been for some time acting on Mrs. Gale's advice; building, planning for the good of the poor, and going out of herself more and more. She compared notes constantly with Miss Gale, and conceived a friendship for her. It had been a long time coming, because at first she disliked Miss Gale's manners very much. But that lady had nursed her tenderly, and now advised her; and Zoe, who could not do anything by halves, became devoted to her.

As she warmed to her good work, she gave signs of clearer judgment. She never mentioned Severne; but she no longer absolutely avoided Ina Klosking's name; and one day she spoke of her as a high-principled woman, for which the Gale kissed her on the spot.

One name she often uttered, and always with regret and self-reproach — Lord Uxmoor's. I think that, now she was herself building and planning for the permanent improvement of the poor, she felt the tie of a kindred sentiment. Uxmoor was her predecessor in this good work too; and would have been her associate, if she had not been so blind. This thought struck deep in her. Her mind ran more and more on Uxmoor, his manliness, his courage in her defence, and his gentlemanly fortitude and bravery in leaving her without a word, at her request. Running over all these, she often blushed with shame, and her eyes filled with sorrow at thinking of how she had treated him, and lost him forever by not deserving him.

She even made oblique and timid inquiries; but could learn nothing of him, except that he sent periodical remittances to Miss Gale, for managing his improvements. These, however, came in through a country agent from a town agent, and left no clew.

But one fine day, with no warning except to his own people, Lord Uxmoor came home, and the next day rode to Hillstoke to talk matters over with Miss Gale. He was fortunate enough to find her at home. He thanked her for the zeal and enthusiasm she had shown, and the progress his works had made under her supervision.

He was going away without even mentioning the Vizard family.

But the crafty Gale detained him. "Going to Vizard Court?" said she.

"No," said he very dryly.

"Ah, I understand; but perhaps you would not mind going with me as far as Islip. There is something there I wish you to see."

"Humph! Is it anything very particular? Because" —

"It is. Three cottages rising, with little flower-gardens in front, square plots behind, and arrangements for breeding calves, with other ingenious novelties. A new head come into our business, my lord."

"You have converted Vizard? I thought you would. He is a satirical fellow; but he will listen to reason."

"No, it is not Mr. Vizard; indeed it is no convert of mine. It is an independent enthusiast. But I really believe your work at home had some hand in firing her enthusiasm."

"A lady! Do I know her?"

"You may. I suppose you know everybody in Barfordshire. Will you come? Do!"

"Of course I will come, Miss Gale. Please tell one of your people to walk my horse down after us."

She had her hat on in a moment, and walked him down to Islip.

Her tongue was not idle on the road. "You don't ask after the people," said she. "There's poor Miss Vizard. She had a sad illness. We were almost afraid we should lose her."

"Heaven forbid!" said Uxmoor, startled by this sudden news.

"Mademoiselle Klosking got quite well: and oh! what do you think? Mr. Severne turned out to be her husband."

"What is that?" shouted Uxmoor, and stopped dead short. "Mr. Severne a married man!"

"Yes; and Mademoiselle Klosking a married woman."

"You amaze me. Why, that Mr. Severne was paying his attentions to Miss Vizard."

"So I used to fancy," said Rhoda, carelessly. "But you see, it came out he was married, and so of course she packed him off with a flea in his ear."

"Did she? — when was that?"

"Let me see, it was the 17th of October."

"Why, that was the very day I left England."

"How odd! Why did you not stay another week? Gentlemen are so impatient. Never mind, that is an old story now. Here we are: those are the cottages. The workmen are at dinner. Ten to one the enthusiast is there: this is her time. You stay here; I'll go and see." She went off on tiptoe, and peeped and pried here and there, like a young witch. Presently she took a few steps towards him, with her finger mysteriously to her lips, and beckoned him. He entered into the pantomime — she seemed so earnest in it — and came to her softly.

"Do just take a peep in at that opening for a door,"

said she; "then you'll see her; her back is turned. She is lovely; only, you know, she has been ill, and I don't think she is very happy."

Uxmoor thought this peeping at enthusiasts rather an odd proceeding, but Miss Gale had primed his curiosity, and he felt naturally proud of a female pupil. He stepped up lightly, looked in at the door, and, to his amazement, saw Zoe Vizard sitting on a carpenter's bench, with her lovely head in the sun's rays. He started, then gazed, then devoured her with his eyes.

What! was this his pupil?

How gentle and sad she seemed! All his stoicism melted at the sight of her. She sat in a sweet pensive attitude, pale and drooping, but, to his fancy, lovelier than ever. She gave a little sigh. His heart yearned. She took out a letter, read it slowly, and said, softly and slowly, "Poor fel-low!" He thought he recognized his own handwriting, and could stand no more. He rushed in, and was going to speak to her; but she screamed, and no conjuror ever made a card disappear quicker than she did that letter, as she bounded away like a deer, and stood, blushing scarlet, and palpitating all over.

Uxmoor was ashamed of his *brusquerie*.

"What a brute I am, to frighten you like this!" said he. "Pray forgive me; but the sight of you, after all these weary months — and you said 'Poor fellow!'"

"Did I?" said Zoe, faintly, looking scared.

"Yes, sweet Zoe; and you were reading a letter."

No reply.

"I thought the poor fellow might be myself. Not that I am to be pitied, if you think of me still."

"I do, then — very often. Oh, Lord Uxmoor, I want to go down on my knees to you."

"That is odd, now; for it is exactly what I should like to do to you."

"What for? It is I who have behaved so ill."

"Never mind that; I love you."

"But you mustn't. You must love some worthy person."

"Oh, you leave that to me. I have no other intention. But may I just see whose letter you were reading?"

"Oh, pray don't ask me."

"I insist on knowing."

"I will not tell you. There it is." She gave it to him with a guilty air, and hid her face.

"Dear Zoe, suppose I was to repeat the offer I made here?"

"I advise you not," said she, all in a flurry.

"Why?"

"Because — because — I might say 'yes.'"

"Well, then, I'll take my chance once more. Zoe, will you try and love me?"

"Try? I believe I do love you, or nearly. I think of you very often."

"Then you will do something to make me happy."

"Anything; everything."

"Will you marry me?"

"Yes, that I will," said Zoe, almost impetuously; "and then," with a grand look of conscious beauty, "I can *make* you forgive me."

Uxmoor, on this, caught her in his arms, and kissed her with such fire that she uttered a little stifled cry of alarm; but it was soon followed by a sigh of complacency, and she sank, resistless, on his manly breast.

So, after two sieges, he carried that fair citadel by assault.

Then let not the manly heart despair, nor take a mere brace of "Noes" from any woman. Nothing short of three negatives is serious.

They walked out arm in arm, and very close to each other; and he left her, solemnly engaged.

Leaving this pair to the delights of courtship, and growing affection on Zoe's side, — for warm attachment of the noblest kind did grow, by degrees, out of her penitence and esteem, and desire to repair her fault, — I must now take up the other thread of this narrative, and apologize for having inverted the order of events; for it was, in reality, several days after this happy scene, that Mademoiselle Klosking sent for Miss Gale.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Vizard, then, with Ashmead, returned home in despair; and Zoe, now happy in her own mind, was all tenderness and sisterly consolation. They opened their hearts to each other, and she showed her wish to repay the debt she owed him. How far she might have succeeded, in time, will never be known. For he had hardly been home a week, when Miss Gale returned, all in black, and told him Severne was dead and buried.

He was startled, and even shocked, remembering old times; but it was not in human nature he should be sorry. Not to be indecorously glad at so opportune an exit, was all that could be expected from him.

When she had given him the details, his first question was, "How did she bear it?"

"She is terribly cut up — more than one would think possible; for she was ice and marble to him, before he was hurt to death."

"Where is she?"

"Gone to London. She will write to me, I suppose, poor dear. But one must give her time."

From that hour Vizard was in a state of excitement, hoping to hear from Ina Klosking, or about her; but unwilling, from delicacy, to hurry matters.

At last he became impatient, and wrote to Ashmead, whose address he had, and said, frankly, he had a delicacy in intruding on Mademoiselle Klosking in her grief. Yet his own feelings would not allow him to seem to neglect her. Would Mr. Ashmead, then, tell him where she was, as she had not written to any one in

Barfordshire — not even to her tried friend, Miss Gale? He received an answer by return of post: —

DEAR SIR, — I am grieved to tell you that Mademoiselle Klosking has retired from public life. She wrote to me three weeks ago, from Dover, requesting me to accept, as a token of her esteem, the surplus money I hold in hand for her — I always drew her salary — and bidding me farewell. The sum included her profits by Psalmody, minus her expenses, and was so large it could never have been intended as a mere recognition of my humble services; and I think I have seldom felt so down-hearted as on receiving this princely donation. It has enabled me to take better offices, and it may be the foundation of a little fortune; but I feel I have lost the truly great lady who has made a man of me. Sir, the relish is gone for my occupation. I can never be so happy as I was in working the interests of that great genius, whose voice made our leading soprani sound like whistles, and who honored me with her friendship. Sir, she was not like other leading ladies, she never bragged, never spoke ill of any one; and *you* can testify to her virtue and her discretion.

I am truly sorry to learn from you that she has written to no one in Barfordshire. I saw, by her letter to me, she had left the stage; but her dropping you all looks as if she had left the world. I do hope she has not been so mad as to go into one of those cursed convents.

Mr. Vizard, I will now write to friends in all the Continental towns where there is good music. She will not be able to keep away from that long. I will also send photographs; and hope we may hear something. If not, perhaps a *judicious advertisement* might remind her that she is inflicting pain upon persons to whom she is dear.

I am, sir, your obliged and grateful servant,

JOSEPH ASHMEAD.

Here was a blow. I really believe Vizard felt this more deeply than all his other disappointments.

He brooded over it for a day or two; and then, as he thought Miss Gale a very ill-used person, though not, of

course, so ill-used as himself, he took her Ashmead's letter.

"This is nice," said she. "There, I must give up loving women. Besides, they throw me over the moment a man comes, if it happens to be the right one."

"Unnatural creatures!" said Vizard.

"Ungrateful, at all events."

"Do you think she has gone into a convent?"

"Not she. In the first place, she is a Protestant; and, in the second, she is not a fool."

"I will advertise."

"The idea!"

"Do you think I am going to sit down with my hands before me, and lose her forever?"

"No, indeed; I don't think you are that sort of man at all; ha! ha!"

"Oh, Miss Gale, pity me. Tell me how to find her. That Fanny Dover says women are only enigmas to men, they understand one another."

"What!" said Rhoda, turning swiftly on him; "does that little chit pretend to read my noble Ina?"

"If she cannot, perhaps you can; you are so shrewd. Do tell me, what does it all mean?"

"It means nothing at all, I dare say; only a woman's impulse. They are such geese at times, every one of them."

"Oh, if I did but know what country she is in, I would ransack it!"

"Hum!—countries are biggish places."

"I don't care."

"What will you give me to tell you where she is at this moment?"

"All I have in the world."

"That is sufficient. Well, then, first assign me your estates; then fetch me an ordnance map of creation, and I will put my finger on her."

"You little mocking fiend, you!"

"I am not. I'm a tall, beneficent angel; and I'll tell you where she is — for nothing. Keep your land; who wants it? — it is only a bother."

"For pity's sake, don't trifle with me."

"I never will, where your heart is interested. She is at Zutzig."

"Ah, you good girl! She has written to you."

"Not a line, the monster! And I'll serve her out. I'll teach her to play hide-and-seek with Gale, M.D."

"Zutzig!" said Vizard; "how can you know?"

"What does *that* matter? Well — yes — I will reveal the mental process. First of all, she has gone to her mother."

"How do you know that?"

"Oh, dear, dear, dear! Because that is where every daughter goes in trouble. I should — she *has*. Fancy you not seeing that! Why, Fanny Dover would have told you that much in a moment. But now you will have to thank *my* mother for teaching me attention, the parent of memory. Pray, sir, who were the witnesses to that abominable marriage of hers?"

"I remember two, Baron Hompesch" —

"No, Count Hompesch."

"And Count Meurice."

"Viscount. What! have you forgotten Herr Formes, Fräulein Graafe, Zug the Capellmeister, and her very mother? Come now, whose daughter is she?"

"I forget, I'm sure."

"Walter Ferris and Eva Klosking, of Zutzig in Denmark. Pack — start for Copenhagen. Consult an ordnance map there. Find out Zutzig. Go to Zutzig, and you have got her. It is some hole in a wilderness, and she can't escape."

"You clever little angel! I'll be there in three days. Do you really think I shall succeed?"

"Your own fault if you don't. She has run into a *cul de sac* through being too clever; and, besides, women sometimes run away just to be caught, and hide on purpose to be found. I should not wonder if she has said to herself, 'He will find me if he loves me so very, very much — I'll try him.'"

"Not a word more, angelic fox," said Vizard; "I'm off to Zutzig."

He went out on fire. She opened the window, and screeched after him, "Everything is fair after her behavior to me. Take her a book of those spiritual songs she is so fond of. 'Johnny comes marching home' is worth the lot, I reckon."

Away went Vizard; found Copenhagen with ease; Zutzig with difficulty, being a small village. But once there, he soon found the farmhouse of Eva Klosking. He drove up to the door. A Danish laborer came out from the stable directly; and a buxom girl, with pale golden hair, opened the door. These two seized his luggage, and conveyed it into the house, and the hired vehicle to the stable. Vizard thought it must be an inn.

The girl bubbled melodious sounds, and ran off and brought a sweet, venerable dame. Vizard recognized Eva Klosking at once.

The old lady said, "Few strangers come here — are you not English?"

"Yes, madam."

"It is Mr. Vizard — is it not?"

"Yes, madam."

"Ah, sir, my daughter will welcome you, but not more heartily than I do. My child has told me all she owes to you," — then in Danish, "God bless the hour you come under this roof."

Vizard's heart beat tumultuously, wondering how Ina Klosking would receive him. The servant had told her

a tall stranger was come. She knew in a moment who it was; so she had the advantage of being prepared.

She came to him, her cheeks dyed with blushes, and gave him both hands. "You here!" said she; "oh, happy day! Mother, he must have the south chamber. I will go and prepare it for him. Tecla! — Tecla!" — and she was all hostess. She committed him to her mother, whilst she and the servant went up-stairs.

He felt discomfited a little. He wanted to know, all in a moment, whether she would love him.

However, Danish hospitality has its good side. He soon found out he might live the rest of his days there if he chose.

He soon got her alone, and said, "You knew I should find you, cruel one."

"How could I dream of such a thing?" said she, blushing.

"Oh, love is a detective. You said to yourself, 'If he loves me as I ought to be loved, he will search Europe for me; but he will find me.'"

"Oh, then it was not to be at peace and rest on my mother's bosom I came here — it was to give you the trouble of running after me. Oh, fie!"

"You are right. I am a vain fool."

"No, that you are not. After all, how do I know all that was in my heart? [Ahem!] Be sure of this, you are very welcome. I must go and see about your dinner."

In that Danish farmhouse life was very primitive. Eva Klosking and both her daughters helped the two female servants, or directed them, in every department. So Ina, who was on her defence, had many excuses for escaping Vizard, when he pressed her too hotly. But at last she was obliged to say, "Oh, pray, my friend, we

are in Denmark: here widows are expected to be discreet."

"But that is no reason why the English fellows who adore them should be discreet."

"Perhaps not; but then the Danish lady runs away."

Which she did.

But, after the bustle of the first day, he had so many opportunities. He walked with her, sat with her while she worked, and hung over her, entranced, while she sang. He produced the book from Vizard Court, without warning, and she screamed with delight at sight of it, and caught his hand in both hers, and kissed it. She revelled in those sweet strains which had comforted her in affliction; and oh, the eyes she turned on him after singing any song in this particular book! Those tender glances thrilled him to the very marrow.

To tell the honest truth, his arrival was a godsend to Ina Klosking. When she first came home to her native place, and laid her head on her mother's bosom, she was in elysium. The house, the wood-fires, the cooing doves, the bleating calves, the primitive life, the recollections of childhood, all were balm to her, and she felt like ending her days there. But, as the days rolled on, came a sense of monotony and excessive tranquillity. She was on the verge of *ennui* when Vizard broke in upon her.

From that moment there was no stagnation. He made life very pleasant to her; only her delicacy took the alarm at his open declarations — she thought them so premature.

At last he said to her, one day, "I begin to fear you will never love me as I love you."

"Who knows?" said she. "Time works wonders."

"I wonder," said he, "whether you will ever marry any other man?"

Ina was shocked at that. "O my friend! how could I — unless," said she, with a sly side-glance, "you consented?"

"Consent? I'd massacre him."

Ina turned towards him. "You asked my hand at a time when you thought me — I don't know what you thought — that is a thing no woman could forget. And now you have come all this way for me. I am yours, if you can wait for me."

He caught her in his arms. She disengaged herself gently, and her hand rested an unnecessary moment on his shoulder. "Is that how you understand 'waiting'?" said she, with a blush, but an indulgent smile.

"What is the use waiting?"

"It is a matter of propriety."

"How long are we to wait?"

"Only a few months. My friend, it is like a boy to be too impatient. Alas! would you marry me in my widow's cap?"

"Of course I would. Now, Ina, love, a widow who has been two years separated from her husband!"

"Certainly, that makes a difference — in one's own mind. But one must respect the opinion of the world. Dear friend, it is of you I think, though I speak of myself."

"You are an angel. Take your own time. After all, what does it matter? I don't leave Zutzig without you."

Ina's pink tint and sparkling eyes betrayed anything but horror at that insane resolution. However, she felt it her duty to say that it was unfortunate she should always be the person to distract him from his home duties.

"Oh, never mind them!" said this single-hearted lover. "I have appointed Miss Gale viceroy."

However, one day he had a letter from Zoe, telling

him that Lord Uxmoor was now urging her to name the day; but she had declined to do that, not knowing when it might suit him to be at Vizard Court. "But, dearest," said she, "mind, you are not to hurry home for me. I am very happy as I am, and I hope you will soon be as happy, love. She is a noble woman."

The latter part of this letter tempted Vizard to show it to Ina. He soon found his mistake. She kissed it, and ordered him off. He remonstrated. She put on, for the first time in Denmark, her marble look, and said, "You will lessen my esteem, if you are cruel to your sister. Let her name the wedding-day at once; and you must be there to give her away, and bless her union with a brother's love."

He submitted, but a little sullenly, and said it was very hard.

He wrote to his sister, accordingly, and she named the day, and Vizard settled to start for home, and be in time.

As to the proprieties, he had instructed Miss Maitland and Fanny Dover, and given them and La Gale *carte blanche*. It was to be a magnificent wedding.

This being excitement, Fanny Dover was in paradise. Moreover, a rosy-cheeked curate had taken the place of the venerable vicar, and Miss Dover's threat to flirt out the stigma of a nun was executed with promptitude, zeal, pertinacity, and the dexterity that comes of practice. When the day came for his leaving Zutzig, Vizard was dejected. "Who knows when we may meet again?" said he.

Ina consoled him. "Do not be sad, dear friend. You are doing your duty; and, as you do it partly to please me, I ought to try and reward you; ought I not?" And she gave him a strange look.

"I advise you not to press that question," said he.

At the very hour of parting, Ina's eyes were moist with tenderness; but there was a smile on her face very expressive; yet he could not make out what it meant. She did not cry. He thought that hard. It was his opinion that women could always cry. She might have done the usual thing just to gratify him.

He reached home in good time, and played the grand seigneur — nobody could do it better, when driven to it — to do honor to his sister. She was a peerless bride: she stood superior, with ebon locks and coal-black eyes, encircled by six bridesmaids — all picked blondes. The bevy, with that glorious figure in the middle, seemed one glorious and rare flower.

After the wedding, the breakfast, and then the travelling-carriage — the four liveried postilions bedecked with favors.

But the bride wept on Vizard's neck, and a light seemed to leave the house when she was gone. The carriages kept driving away, one after another, till four o'clock; and then Vizard sat disconsolate in his study, and felt very lonely.

Yet a thing no bigger than a leaf sufficed to drive away this sombre mood, — a piece of amber-colored paper, scribbled on with a pencil — a telegram from Ashmead: "Good news: lost sheep turned up. Is now with her mother at Claridge's Hotel."

Then Vizard was in raptures. Now, he understood Ina's composure, and the half-sly look she had given him, and her dry eyes at parting, and other things. He tore up to London directly, with a telegram flying ahead: burst in upon her and had her in his arms in a moment, before her mother. She fenced no longer, but owned he had gained her love as he had deserved it in every way.

She consented to be married that week in London; only she asked for a Continental tour before entering

Vizard Court as his wife; but she did not stipulate even for that; she only asked it submissively, as one whose duty it now was to obey, not dictate.

They were married in St. George's Church very quietly, by special license. Then they saw her mother off, and crossed to Calais. They spent two happy months together on the Continent, and returned to London.

But Vizard was too old-fashioned, and too proud of his wife, to sneak into Vizard Court with her. He did not make it a county matter, but he gave the village such a *fête* as had not been seen for many a day. The preparations were intrusted to Mr. Ashmead, at Ina's request. "He will be sure to make it theatrical," she said; "but perhaps the simple villagers will admire that, and it will amuse you and me, love; and the poor dear old thing will be in his glory — I hope he will not drink too much."

Ashmead was indeed in his glory. Nothing had been seen in a play that he did not electrify Islip with, and the surrounding villages. He pasted large posters on walls and barn-doors, and his small bills curled round the patriarchs of the forest and the roadside trees, and blistered the gate-posts.

The day came. A soapy pole, with a leg of mutton on high for the successful climber; races in sacks; short blindfold races with wheelbarrows; pig with a greasy tail, to be won by him who could catch him and shoulder him, without touching any other part of him; bowls of treacle for the boys to duck heads in and fish out coins; skittles, nine-pins, Aunt Sally, etc., etc., etc.

But what astonished the villagers most was a May-pole, with long ribbons, about which ballet-girls, undisguised as Highlanders, danced, and wound and unwound the parti-colored streamers to the merry fiddle, and then danced reels upon a platform, then returned to their little tent: but out again and danced hornpipes undisguised as Jacky Tars.

Beer flowed from a sturdy regiment of barrels. "The Court" kitchen and the village bakehouse kept pouring forth meats, baked, boiled, and roast; there was a pile of loaves like a haystack; and they roasted an ox whole on the green, and when they found they were burning him raw, they fetched the butcher, like sensible fellows, and dismembered the giant, and so roasted him reasonably.

In the midst of the revelling and feasting, Vizard and Mrs. Vizard were driven into Islip village, in the family coach with four horses, streaming with ribbons.

They drove round the green, bowing and smiling in answer to the acclamations and blessings of the poor, and then to Vizard Court. The great doors flew open. The servants, male and female, lined the hall on both sides, and received her, bowing and courtesying low, on the very spot where she had nearly met her death. Her husband took her hand and conducted her in state to her own apartment.

It was open house to all that joyful day; and at night magnificent fireworks on the sweep, seen from the drawing-room by Mrs. Vizard, Miss Maitland, Miss Gale, Miss Dover, and the rosy-cheeked curate, whom she had tied to her apron-strings.

At two in the morning, Mr. Harris showed Mr. Ashmead to his couch. Both gentlemen went up the stairs a little graver than any of our modern judges, and firm as a rock; but their firmness resembled that of a roof rather than a wall; for these dignities as they went made one inverted V — so, A.

It is time the Woman-Hater drew to a close, for the woman-hater is spoilt. He begins sarcastic speeches, from force of habit, but stops short in the middle. He is a very happy man, and owes it to a woman, and knows it. He adores her; and to love well is to be happy.

But, besides that, she watches over his happiness and his good with that unobtrusive, but minute vigilance which belongs to her sex, and is often misapplied, but not so very often as cynics say. Even the honest friendship between him and the remarkable woman he calls his "virago," gives him many a pleasant hour. He is still a humorist, though cured of his fling at the fair sex. His last tolerable hit was at the monosyllabic names of the immortal composers his wife had disinterred in his library. Says he to parson Denison, hot from Oxford, "They remind me of the Oxford poets in the last century: —

Alma novem celebres genuit Rhedyeina Poetas.
Bubb, Stubb, Grubb, Crabbe, Trappe, Brome, Carey, Tickell, Evans."

As for Ina Vizard, La Klosking no longer, she has stepped into her new place with her native dignity, seemliness, and composure. At first, a few county ladies put their little heads together, and prepared to give themselves airs; but the beauty, dignity, and enchanting grace of Mrs. Vizard swept this little faction away like small dust. Her perfect courtesy, her mild but deep dislike of all feminine backbiting, her dead silence about the absent, except when she can speak kindly — these rare traits have forced, by degrees, the esteem and confidence of her own sex. As for the men, they accepted her at once with enthusiasm. She and Lady Uxmoor are the acknowledged belles of the county. Lady Uxmoor's face is the most admired; but Mrs. Vizard comes next — and her satin shoulders, statuesque bust and arms, and exquisite hand, turn the scale with some. But when she speaks, she charms; and when she sings, all competition dies.

She is faithful to music, and especially to sacred music. She is not very fond of singing at parties, and

sometimes gives offence by declining. Music sets fools talking, because it excites them, and then their folly comes out by the road nature has provided. But when Mrs. Vizard has to sing in one key, and people talk in five other keys, that gives this artist such physical pain that she often declines, merely to escape it. It does not much mortify her vanity, she has so little.

She always sings in church, and sings out, too, when she is there; and plays the harmonium. She trains the villagers — girls, boys, and adults — with untiring good-humor and patience.

Amongst her pupils are two fine voices: Tom Wilder, a grand bass — and the rosy-cheeked curate, a greater rarity still, a genuine counter-tenor.

These two can both read music tolerably; but the curate used to sing everything, however full of joy, with a pathetic whine, for which Vizard chaffed him in vain; but Mrs. Vizard *persuaded* him out of it, where argument and satire failed.

People came far and near to hear the hymns at Islip Church, sung in full harmony — trebles, tenor, counter-tenor, and bass.

A trait — she allows nothing to be sung in church unrehearsed. The rehearsals are on Saturday night, and never shirked, such is the respect for "Our Dame." To be sure, "Our Dame" fills the stomachs and wets the whistles of her faithful choir on Saturday nights.

On Sunday night there are performances of sacred music in the great dining-hall. But these are rather more ambitious than those in the village church. The performers meet on that happy footing of *camaraderie* the fine arts create, the superior respect shown to Mrs. Vizard being mainly paid to her as the greater musician. They attack anthems and services; and a trio, by the parson, the blacksmith, and "Our Dame," is really an

extraordinary treat, owing to the great beauty of the voices. It is also piquant to hear the female singer constantly six, and often ten, notes below the male counter-tenor; but then comes Wilder with his diapason, and the harmony is noble; the more so that Mrs. Vizard rehearses her pupils in the swell — a figure too little practised in music, and nowhere carried out as she does it.

One night the organist of Barford was there. They sang Kent's service in F, and Mrs. Vizard still admired it. She and the parson swelled in the duet — "To be a light to lighten the Gentiles," etc. Organist approved the execution, but said the composition was a meagre thing, quite out of date. "We have much finer things now by learned men of the day."

"Ah," said she, "bring me one."

So, next Sunday, he brought her a learned composition, and played it to her, preliminary to their singing it. But she declined it on the spot. "What!" said she. "Mr. X., would you compare this meaningless stuff with Kent in F? Why, in Kent the dominant sentiment of each composition is admirably preserved. His 'Magnificat' is lofty jubilation, with a free onward rush. His 'Dimittis' is divine repose after life's fever. But this poor pedant's 'Magnificat' begins with a mere crash, and then falls into the pathetic — an excellent thing in its place, but not in a song of triumph. As to his 'Dimittis,' it simply defies the words. This is no Christian sunset. It is not good old Simeon gently declining to his rest, content to close those eyes which had seen the world's salvation. This is a tempest, and all the windows rattling, and the great Napoleon dying, amidst the fury of the elements, with 'tête d'armée!' on his dying lips, and 'battle' in his expiring soul. No, sir; if the learned Englishmen of this day can do nothing nearer the mark

than DOLEFUL MAGNIFICATS and STORMY NUNC DIMITTISES, I shall stand faithful to poor dead Kent, and his fellows — they were my solace in sickness and sore trouble."

In accordance with these views of vocal music, and desirous to expand its sphere, Mrs. Vizard has just offered handsome prizes in the county for the best service, in which the dominant sentiments of the words shall be as well preserved as in Kent's despised service; and another prize to whoever can set any famous short secular poem, or poetical passage (not in ballad metre), to good and appropriate music.

This has elicited several pieces. The composers have tried their hands on Dryden's Ode; on the meeting of Hector and Andromache (Pope's "Homer"); on two short poems of Tennyson, etc.

But it is only the beginning of a good thing. The pieces are under consideration. But Vizard says the competitors are trifles. *He* shall set Mr. Arnold's version of "Hero and Leander" to the harp, and sing it himself. This, he intimates, will silence competition, and prove an era. I think so too, if his music should *happen* to equal the lines in value. But I hardly think it will, because the said Vizard, though he has taste and ear, does not know one note from another. So I hope "Hero and Leander" will fall into abler hands; and, in any case, I trust Mrs. Vizard will succeed in her worthy desire to enlarge, very greatly, the sphere and the nobility of vocal music. It is a desire worthy of this remarkable character, of whom I now take my leave with regret.

I must own that regret is caused in part by my fear that I may not have done her all the justice I desired.

I have long felt and regretted that many able female writers are doing much to perpetuate the petty vices of

a sex, which, after all, is at present but half educated, by devoting three thick volumes to such empty women as biography, though a lower art than fiction, would not waste three pages on. They plead truth and fidelity to nature. "We write the average woman, for the average woman to read," say they. But they are not consistent; for the average woman is under five feet, and rather ugly. Now these paltry women are all beautiful — *καλαι τε μεγαλαι τε*, as Homer hath it.

Fiction has just as much right to select large female souls as biography or painting has; and to pick out a selfish, shallow, illiterate creature, with nothing but beauty, and bestow three enormous volumes on her, is to make a perverse selection, beauty being, after all, rarer in women than wit, sense, and goodness. It is as false and ignoble in art, as to marry a pretty face without heart and brains is silly in conduct.

Besides, it gives the female *reader* a low model instead of a high one, and so does her a little harm; whereas a writer ought to do good — or try, at all events.

Having all this in my mind, and remembering how many noble women have shone like stars in every age and every land, and feeling sure that, as civilization advances, such women will become far more common, I have tried to look ahead and paint La Klosking.

But such portraiture is difficult. It is writing a statue.

> "Qui mihi non credit faciat licet ipse periclum,
> Mox fuerit studiis æquior ille meis."

Harrington Vizard, Esq., caught Miss Fanny Dover on the top round but one of the steps in his library. She looked down, pinkish, and said she was searching for "Tillotson's Sermons."

"What on earth can you want of them?"

"To improve my mind, to be sure," said the minx.

Vizard said, "Now you stay there, miss — don't you move;" and he sent for Ina. She came directly, and he said, "Things have come to a climax. My lady is hunting for 'Tillotson's Sermons.' Poor Denison!" (that was the rosy curate's name.)

"Well," said Fanny, turning red, "I told you I *should*. Why should I be good any longer? All the sick are cured one way or other, and I am myself again."

"Humph!" said Vizard. "Unfortunately for your little plans of conduct, the heads of this establishment here present, have sat in secret committee, and your wings are to be clipped — by order of the Council."

"La!" said Fanny, pertly.

Vizard imposed silence with a lordly wave. "It is a laughable thing; but this divine is in earnest. He has revealed his hopes and fears to me."

"Then he is a great baby," said Fanny, coming down the steps. "No, no; we are both too poor." And she vented a little sigh.

"Not you. The vicar has written to vacate. Now I don't like you much, because you never make me laugh: but I'm awfully fond of Denison; and if you will marry my dear Denison, you shall have the vicarage — it is a fat one."

"Oh, cousin!"

"And," said Mrs. Vizard, "he permits me to furnish it for you. You and I will make it 'a bijou.'"

Fanny kissed them both impetuously, then said she would have a little cry. No sooner said than done. In due course she was Mrs. Denison, and broke a solemn vow that she never would teach girls St. Matthew.

Like coquettes in general, who have had their fling at the proper time, she makes a pretty good wife; but she has one fault — she is too hard upon girls who flirt.

Mr. Ashmead flourishes. Besides his agency, he sometimes treats for a new piece, collects a little company, and tours the provincial theatres. He always plays them a week at Taddington, and with perfect gravity loses six pounds per night. Then he has a "bespeak," Vizard or Uxmoor turn about. There is a line of carriages; the snobs crowd in to see the gentry. Vizard pays twenty pounds for his box, and takes twenty pounds worth of tickets, and Joseph is in his glory, and stays behind the company to go to Islip Church next day, and spend a happy night at the Court. After that he says he feels *good* for three or four days.

Mrs. Gale now leases the Hillstoke farm off Vizard, and does pretty well. She breeds a great many sheep and cattle. The high ground and sheltering woods suit them. She makes a little money every year, and gets a very good house for nothing.

Doctress Gale is still all eyes, and notices everything. She studies hard and practises a little. They tried to keep her out of the Taddington infirmary: but she went almost crying to Vizard, and he exploded with wrath. He consulted Lord Uxmoor, and between them the infirmary was threatened with the withdrawal of eighty annual subscriptions if they persisted. The managers caved in directly, and Doctress Gale is a steady visitor.

A few mothers are coming to their senses, and sending for her to their unmarried daughters. This is the main source of her professional income. She has, however, taken one enormous fee from a *bon vivant*, whose life she saved by esculents. She told him at once he was beyond the reach of medicine, and she could do nothing for him unless he chose to live in her house, and eat and drink only what she should give him. He had a horror of dying, though he had lived so well; so he submitted, and she did actually cure that one glutton. But she

says she will never do it again. "After forty years of made dishes they ought to be content to die; it is bare justice," quoth Rhoda Gale, M.D.

An apothecary in Barford threatened to indict this Gallic physician. But the other medical men dissuaded him, partly from liberality, partly from discretion: the fine would have been paid by public subscription twenty times over, and nothing gained but obloquy. The doctress would never have yielded.

She visits, and prescribes, and laughs at the law, as love is said to laugh at locksmiths.

To be sure, in this country, a law is no law, when it has no foundation in justice, morality, or public policy.

Happy in her position, and in her friends, she now reviews past events with the candor of a mind that loves truth sincerely. She went into Vizard's study one day, folded her arms, and delivered herself as follows: "I guess there's something I ought to say to *you*. When I told you about our treatment at Edinburgh, the wound still bled, and I did not measure my words as I ought, professing science. Now I feel a call to say that the Edinburgh school, was, after all, more liberal to us than any other in Great Britain or Ireland. The others closed the door in our faces. This school opened it half. At first there was a liberal spirit: but the friends of justice got frightened, and the unionists stronger. We were overpowered at every turn. But what I omitted to impress on you is, that when we were defeated, it was always by very small majorities. That was so even with the opinions of the judges, which have been delivered since I told you my tale. There were six jurists, and only seven pettifoggers. It was so all through. Now, for practical purposes, the act of a majority is the act of a body. It must be so; it is the way of the world: but when an accurate person comes to describe

a business, and deal with the character of a whole university, she is not to call the larger half the whole, and make the matter worse than it was. That is not scientific. Science *dis*criminates."

I am not sorry the doctress offered this little explanation; it accords with her sober mind and her veneration of truth. But I could have dispensed with it for one. In Britain, when we are hurt, we howl; and the deuce is in it if the weak may not howl when the strong overpower them by the arts of the weak.

Should that part of my tale rouse any honest sympathy with this Englishwoman who can legally prescribe, consult, and take fees, in France, but not in England, though she could eclipse at a public examination nine-tenths of those who can, it may be as well to inform them that, even while her narrative was in the press, our government declared it would do something for the relief of medical women, but would sleep upon it.

This is, on the whole, encouraging. But still, where there is no stimulus of faction or personal interest to urge a measure, but only such "unconsidered trifles" as public justice and public policy, there are always two great dangers: 1, that the sleep may know no waking; 2, that after too long a sleep the British legislator may jump out of bed, all in a hurry, and do the work ineffectually — for nothing leads oftener to reckless haste than long delay.

I hope, then, that a few of my influential readers will be vigilant, and challenge a full discussion by the whole mind of Parliament, so that no temporary, pettifogging half-measure may slip into a thin house — like a weasel into an empty barn — and so obstruct for many years legislation upon durable principle. The thing lies in a nutshell. The legislature has been entrapped. It never intended to outlaw women in the matter. The persons

who have outlawed them are all subjects, and the engines of outlawry have been "certificates of attendance on lectures," and "public examinations." By closing the lecture-room and the examination-hall to all women — learned or unlearned — a clique has outlawed a population, under the letter, not the spirit, of a badly-written statute. But it is for the three estates of the British realm to leave off scribbling statutes, and learn to write them, and to bridle the egotism of cliques, and respect the nation. The present form of government exists on that understanding, and so must all forms of government in England. And it is so easy. It only wants a little singleness of mind and common-sense. Years ago certificates of attendance on various lectures were reasonably demanded. They were a slight presumptive evidence of proficiency, and had a supplementary value, because the public examinations were so loose and inadequate; but once establish a stiff, searching, sufficient, incorruptible, public examition, and then to have passed that examination is not presumptive but demonstrative proof of proficiency, and swallows up all minor and merely presumptive proofs.

There is nothing much stupider than anachronism. What avail certificates of lectures in our day? either the *knowledge* obtained at the lectures enables the pupil to pass the great examination, or it does not. If it does, the certificate is superfluous; if it does not, the certificate is illusory.

What the British legislator, if for once he would rise to be a lawgiver, should do, and that quickly, is to throw open the medical schools to all *persons* for matriculation. To throw open all hospitals and infirmaries to matriculated students, without respect of sex, as they are already open, by shameless partiality and transparent greed, to unmatriculated women, provided they confine their ambition to the most repulsive and unfeminine

part of medicine, the nursing of both sexes and laying out of corpses.

Both the above rights, as independent of sex as other natural rights, should be expressly protected by "mandamus," and "suit for damages." The lecturers to be compelled to lecture to mixed classes, or to give separate lectures to matriculated women for half fees, whichever those lecturers prefer. Before this clause all difficulties would melt like hail in the dogdays. Male modesty is a purely imaginary article set up for a trade purpose, and will give way to justice the moment it costs the proprietors fifty per cent. I know my own sex from hair to heel, and will take my Bible oath of *that.*

Of the foreign matriculated student, British or European, nothing should be demanded but the one thing which matters one straw — viz., infallible proofs of proficiency in anatomy, surgery, medicine, and its collaterals, under public examination. This, which is the only real safeguard, and the only necessary safeguard to the *public,* and the only one *the public* asks, should be placed, in some degree, under the *sure control of government* without respect of cities; and much greater vigilance exercised than ever has been yet. Why, under the system which excludes learned women, male dunces have been personated by able students, and so diplomas stolen again and again. The student, male or female, should have power to compel the examiners, by mandamus and other stringent remedies, to examine at fit times and seasons. In all the *paper-work* of these examinations, the name, and of course the sex, of the student should be concealed from the examiners. There is a very simple way of doing it.

Should a law be passed on this broad and simple basis, that law will stand immortal, with pettifogging acts falling all around, according to the custom of the country.

The larger half of the population will no longer be unconstitutionally juggled, under cover of law, out of their right to take their secret ailments to a skilled physician of their own sex, and compelled to go, blushing, writhing, and, after all, concealing and fibbing, to a male physician; the picked few no longer robbed of their right to science, reputation, and bread.

The good effect on the whole mind of woman would be incalculable. Great prizes of [illegible]ty and genius offered to the able few have always had a salutary and wonderful operation on the many who [illegible]ain them. It would be great and glad tidings to [illegible] whole female youth to say, "You *need* not be fri[illegible]rs; you *need* not give the colts fifty yards start [illegible]e Derby — I mean, you need not waste three hours of the short working day in dressing and undressing, and combing your hair. You need not throw away the very seed-time of life on music though you are unmusical to the backbone; nor yet on your three 'C's' — croquet, crochet, and coquetry: for civilization and sound law have opened to you one great, noble, and difficult profession with three branches, two of which Nature intended you for. The path is arduous, but flowers grow beside it, and the prize is great."

I say that this prize, and frequent intercourse with those superior women who have won it, would leaven the whole sex with higher views of life than enter their heads at present; would raise their self-respect, and set thousands of them to study the great and noble things that are in medicine, and connected with it, instead of childish things.

Is there really one manly heart that would grudge this boon to a sex which is the nurse and benefactress of every man in his tender and most precarious years?

Realize the hard condition of women. Amongst barbarians their lot is unmixed misery; with us their condition is better, but not what it ought to be, because we are but half-civilized, and so their lot is still very unhappy compared with ours.

And we are so unreasonable. We men cannot go straight ten yards without *rewards* as well as punishments. Yet we would govern our women by punishments alone. They are eternally tempted to folly, yet snubbed the moment they would be wise. A million shops spread their nets, and entice them by their direst foible. Their very mothers — for want of medical knowledge in the sex — clasp the fatal, idiotic corset on their growing bodies, though thin as a lath. So the girl grows up, crippled in the ribs and lungs by her own mother; and her life, too, is in stays — cabined, cribbed, confined: unless she can paint, or act, or write novels, every path of honorable ambition is closed to her. We treat her as we do our private soldiers — the lash, but no promotion; and our private soldiers are the scum of Europe for that very reason, and no other.

I say that to open the study and practice of medicine to women-folk, under the infallible safeguard of a stiff public examination, will be to rise in respect for human rights to the level of European nations, who do not brag about just freedom half as loud as we do; and to respect the constitutional rights of many million citizens, who all pay the taxes like men, and by the contract with the State implied in that payment, by the clear human right they have yet to go down on their knees for. But it will also import into medical science a new and less theoretical, but cautious, teachable, observant kind of intellect; it will give the larger half of the nation an honorable ambition, and an honorable pursuit, towards which their hearts and instincts are bent by Nature herself; it will

tend to elevate this whole sex, and its young children, male as well as female, and so will advance the civilization of the world, which in ages past, in our own day, and in all time, hath, and doth, and will keep step exactly with the progress of women towards mental equality with men.

THE WANDERING HEIR.

A MATTER-OF-FACT ROMANCE.

THE WANDERING HEIR.

CHAPTER I.

One raw, windy day, in the spring of 1726, there was a strange buzzing by the side of a public road in the very heart of old Ireland. It came from a great many boys seated by the roadside, plying their books and slates, with here and there a neighborly prod, followed by invectives whispered — for the pedagogue was marching up and down the line with a keen eye, and an immensely long black ruler well known to the backs and limbs of the scholars, except three or four whose fathers asked him to dine on poultry or butcher's meat whenever those rarities were at the fire. The schoolroom stood opposite, and still belched through its one window the peat-smoke that had driven out the hive. There was a chimney; but so constructed, that, on a windy day, the smoke pooh-poohed it, and sought the sky by vents more congenial to the habits of the nation.

The boys were mostly farmers' sons, in long freize coats, breeches loose at the knee, clouted shoes tied with strips of raw neat-skin, and slovenly caubeens; but there was a sprinkling of broadcloth, plain three-cornered hats, and shoe-buckles; there were also five or six barefooted urchins, not the worst scholars there; for this strange anomalous people, with many traits of the pure savage, had been leaders in mediæval literature, had

founded the University of Paris, and had still a noble reverence for learning; the humblest would struggle to pay a sharp boy's schooling, and so qualify him for business, perhaps for the priesthood itself, pinnacle of an Irish peasant's ambition.

Aloof from this motley line stood a single, timid figure; a boy with delicate skin, and exquisite golden hair, his face pale and anxious. He wore a straight-cut coat, scarlet once, but now a rusty red, no hat, shoes with steel buckles — and holes. This decayed little gentleman peered anxiously round a corner of the building, and, as soon as ever the school broke up with horrid yells, ran and hid himself.

Too late! one quick young eye had seen him; and, while the rest dispersed — two or three galloping off on rough ponies, neck or nought, in a style to set their unfortunate mothers screaming to the saints — a little party of five, eager for diversion on the spot where they had suffered study, chased the golden-haired boy with an appalling whoop. Fear gave him wings; but numbers prevailed; they caught him and plagued him sore; jibed him, poked him, pinched him, got him by the head and legs, and flogged a tree with him, and in the exuberance of their gay hearts pumped on his head till he gasped and cried for mercy, in vain.

"That is foul play — five to one," said a cheerful voice — *crick, crack, crick, crack, crack* — and in a moment Master Matthews, one of the superior scholars, made all five heads ring with a light shillelah, but not a grain of malice; only he was a promising young cudgel player, and must be diverted as well as the younger ones. The obstreperous mirth turned with ludicrous swiftness to yells of dismay.

But the warlike spirit of the O'Tooles and the O'Shaughnessys soon revived; battle was quickly

arrayed with traditionary skill; here a crescent of five, armed with stones, there Master Matthews, with a tree at his back, the lid of a slop-pail for a shield, and a shillelah for sword, grinding his teeth, and looking dangerous, the fair-headed boy clasping his hands apart. Mr. Hoolaghan and his servant man ran out staring.

"Och, ye disperadoes, ye murtherin' villins! what is this at all?" cried Mr. Hoolaghan.

Then each side set to work to talk him over. "Masther avick," whined the army, "he broke our heads, and kilt us with his murtherin' shillelah, the maraudin' villin, intirely."

"Masther dear, they were five to one, torminting the life out of this little boccawn. Why didn't ye catch up a flint and crack their skulls like nuts at Hallowe'en?"

"Och, hear to the fungaleering ruffin!" And five hands were lifted high in a moment, each armed with a pebble.

Then the pedagogue grew warm, and gave them what he called his "tall English." "The first that rises a hand I'll poolverize um. Lay down your bellicose weapons, ye insurrectionary thaves, or Norah shall perforate ye — bring the spit out, wench — and transfix ye to the primises, while I flagellate ye by dozens, till the blood pours down yer heels; lay down yer sprig of homicide, and stand on it this minit, ye vagabone, or I'll baste you with the kitchen poker, till your back is coorant jelly and your head is a mashed turnup."

Mrs. Malaprop observed in the next generation that "There is nothing so conciliating to young people as a little severity," and so it proved even in this: the weapons were laid down, and then Matthew Hoolaghan, changing at once to the most affectionate and dulcet tones, said, "Now, honeys, we'll discoorse the matter, not

like the barbarian voolgar, that can only ratiocinate with a bludgeon, but like good Chrischians and rale piripatetic philosophers that I have insensed in polite larning, multiplication, and all the humanities, glory be to God. Spake first, ye omadhaun, ye causa titirrima belly; and revale your crime."

"Masther, sir," said the victim, "I never done no crime. They do be always torminting me. I never offinded them. Spake the truth now; did iver I offind you?"

"Sowl, ye did then. Masther dear, look at um: he's got a Protestant face."

"Oh, fie! my father is a good Catholic; isn't he then, sir?"

The pedagogue took fright at this turn. "Och, murther, murther!" he shrieked, "ye conthrairy divils, would ye import the apple o' discord, an' set my two parishes cracking skulls, and starving me? Would ye conflagrate the Timple of the Muses with ojum theologicum? The first that divairges to controvarsial polimics in this acadimy, I'll go to my brother the priest, and have him exkimminicated alive. Face! it is a likely face enough, I'm thinkin.'"

"It's the purtiest in the school ony way," said Norah —the argument having now come within her scope— "and a dale the clanest." Whereupon, one of these ready imps reminded her it was the oftenest pumped on.

Said another, "He shouldn't pretind to be a lord's son then, the little glorigoteen."

"But I am a lord's son," said the boy, stoutly. Then there was a roar of derision. But the boy persisted that he was Lord Altham's son, and half the county of Wexford belonged to his father. Both sides appealed to the master; but he only said, "Hum!" So Norah put in her word, and said the boy had been brought

there by a great lord in a coach and six; and the lord had kissed him tenderly, and called him his darling Jemmy, in her sight and hearing.

Mr. Hoolaghan admitted all that, but said, "If he was my lord's *real* son, would my lord leave his board, lodging, and schooling unpaid, these fourteen months?"

"Divil a one of him!" replied an urchin, with the modest promptitude of his tribe.

Jemmy was himself struck by this argument. "Alas! then," said he, "I fear he must be dead. He was always good to me before. I was never away from him in all my life, till now. Norah, when we were at Kinna, I had a little horse, and boots, and rode with him a-hunting. I went to a day-school then, and mine was the only laced hat in the school. I brought it here."

"Thrue for you, ma bouchal," said Norah, "and by the same token 'twas that thief o' the warld, Tim Doolan, that stripped it, and gave the lace to his cross-eyed wench, bloody end to the pair of 'em."

"O masther!" cried James, all of a sudden, clasping his hands, "you that knows everything, tell me, is my father dead? The only friend I have. Ochoon! Ochoon!"

"Nay, nay," said Hoolaghan, touched by this cry of despair, "Jemmy avick, if Lord Altham is your father, ye needn't cry and wring your hands; for he is alive, bad cess to him: my cousin seen him in Dublin a se'nnight ago, spinding money like wather, and divil a tinpenny he paid me this fourteen months."

"Masther, sir," said Jemmy, firmly, "how far is it to Dublin, av ye plase?"

"A hundred miles and more."

"Then I'll go to him there, sir."

There was an ironical shout.

"Give me one good male to start on, and I'll go; for I'm

a lost boy here; and I'm ashamed to be in this place, an' him not paying for me, like the rest."

Now this sudden resolution was quite agreeable to Hoolaghan. Norah took the boy into the kitchen to feed him for the journey. The cubs began to feel rather sorry, for they were thoughtless, not bad-hearted; they scraped together fourpence for his journey. Norah gave him an old hat, and kisses, and a word of feminine advice. "Ma bouchal," said she, "whiniver you are in trouble, spake to the women; they will be *your* best friends; but keep clear of your own color — not intirely — only brown women, and yellow women, is more prifirabler, by raison you are fair like an angel herself."

The boys set him on his road a mile; then stopped and blessed him, and asked his forgiveness, being, to tell the truth, now quaking in the shoes of superstition, lest he should put "the hard word" on them at parting, and him "a piece of an orphan," as the biggest remarked. But his nature was too gentle for that: he forgave them, and blessed them, and they all kissed him, and he kissed them, and they went their way. But Matthews would go another mile with him. At parting, he said, "Tell me God's truth. Are ye that lord's son?"

"Indeed, then, I am, sir."

"I wish I had known before. Let me look at thee well. I wonder whether I shall ever meet thee again, purty Jemmy."

"Indeed and I hope so, sir; for you are all the friend I iver found in this place."

"Jemmy, it seems hard, to make friends one afternoon, and then to part forever," said the elder boy, philosophizing.

Jemmy's heart was swelling already; and, at this, the lonely boy began to cry piteously. Then Matthews

blubbered right out; and so they cried together, and kissed one another many times, and James Annesley began his wanderings.

He walked on till dusk, and saw a small farm: he went by Norah's advice; made up straight to the farmer's wife, and asked her leave to sleep on the premises. She looked at him full before she answered; gave him some potatoes and buttermilk, and let him sleep in a little barn. He walked on the next day, and fared much the same; but, by the third day, he got footsore, and could only limp along; but he persevered: he sometimes got a lift in a cart, and sometimes, when a farmer's wife, or daughter, on horseback, overtook him, he would appeal to her, especially if she was dark; and true it was, the dark women, of whom there were plenty in Ireland, would generally take him up and give him a ride before, or behind, as might be most convenient.

Still creeping on, he got into a county where the people had faces unlike those he had left behind, and both men and women wore long frieze cloaks, and the women linen head-dresses, and sometimes a handkerchief over that: and he limped into a village where was a sort of fair; but he had no money left to spend, and he sat down on the shaft of a cart, disconsolate, and, seeing others so merry, began to weep with fatigue, hunger, and sorrow. By and by a man saw him, and asked him what ailed him: and he told his sad case. "Nay, then, sir," said the man, "you must come to The O'Brien." He took him to a little old man, exceedingly shabby, on a little white horse; he doffed his caubeen, and said, "An' it plase your honor's worship, this is a gintleman's son in throuble; he's hunting his own father — glory be to God."

"Who is your father, friend?" asked The O'Brien.

"An' please your worship, he is my Lord Altham."

The O'Brien made a wry face. "That is not Oirish," said he. "Some mushroom lord; maybe one of William's men."

"Nay, sir, he is a good Catholic. Glory be to Hiven."

By this time there was a bit of a crowd collected to hear; but the dialogue was interrupted by a simple fellow who had lost his wife. He burst in wildly, crying, "Arrah, people, people, did ye see Mary Sullivan, a tall woman, a tall yellow woman, not very yellow intirely, with a white pipe in her cheek?" They roared at him, but he just rushed on, repeating that strange formula. The fair rang with it. But the little old scarecrow, descended from Ireland's kings, smiled superior, and took Jemmy home on his saddle-bow. Caubeens were lifted in the village, wherever this decayed noble passed. He told the boy the whole county belonged to him and his ancestors, and he should sup and sleep where he liked. Finally, he showed him a large mansion, and a cabin, not far apart; let him know that these houses were his; only various families had lived in the mansion for the last few centuries. "Now, sir," said he, "will you slape in my large house, where other people live this five hundred years, by my lave, or in my small house where I live — at present — for my convaynience?" Says Jemmy, "Sir, the small house, if it please you; by reason I desire your company, as well as your house." The mighty scarecrow was pleased with this answer, and took him to his mud cabin. He sent his one servant, a bare-legged girl, to demand a rasher from a neighboring farmer. No doubt she said The O'Brien had company; for eggs and perch were sent directly, as well as a large piece of bacon. The two personages supped together, and slept on a heap of straw.

In the morning, one peasant brought buttermilk, and another trout, and another oatmeal, and another a

vehicle, the body of which was a square box, suspended on a trap: and The O'Brien's guest was taken five miles on his road, and his blessing sought by his conductor, a simple peasant, who discoursed on the grandeur of The O'Brien, and boasted that neither he nor his race had ever done a hand's turn of work — and would never be allowed to — in the country. James limped out of that county into another, and met with no adventure, till he came to Dunnyshallan, and was turned into a dice-box. The young men of the village had cut a gigantic backgammon board on the green, very neat; it occupied the sixth part of an acre; and they had black and white flagstones to play with. Their dice-box was always a boy; and, catching sight of James, one sang out, "Hurrooh! here's a strange gossoon. *We'll have luck all round.*"

So James was seated on high, with his back to the players, and ordered, on pain of death, to sing out sixes, fours, quatre-ace, and all the combinations *ad libitum*. He complied, to avoid worse; and then it was he learned the literature of curses; in which this one small island was so fertile and ingenious, that all the blasphemy in the rest of Europe was poor and monotonous by comparison. The infinite maledictions would doubtless have instructed and amused him, had they been levelled at another; but, being fired at him whenever he called a number that did not suit the player, and uttered with every appearance of fury, they frightened him, and he began to tremble and snivel.

"Now, thin, ye vagabone, give me a good number, or may St. Anthony's sow trample out your intrails."

"Oh, oh, oh! Sixes."

"Sixes! ye conthrary villin! Is it sixes I'm asking? The divil go a-buck-hunting with ye up and down" (the hunting-ground was distinctly specified).

"Oh, oh, oh!"

"Never heed the bally-ragging ruffin. Cry for me now, honey."

"Och! I'm afraid. Deuce-ace."

"Och, ye're a broth of a boy. May ye live till the skirts of your coat knock your brains out! Now cry for Barney."

"Oh! I am afraid to spake. The Virgin be good to me. Deuce-ace."

"Och, ye thafe o' the world. May you die with a caper in your heel, and give the crows a puddin'."

And so on till dark, when a losing player threatened to murder the dice: a winner objected: the two quarrelled: shillelahs crossed; a ring was made; and there was much subtle play, and the whistling cudgels parried, or met with a clash, and bent over each other; till at last Jemmy's friend parried an excessive blow, and, rising nimbly, delivered such a crasher on the other's skull, that it literally shot him to the ground like a bullet, and he rolled over, by the impetus, after he landed.

Then Jemmy screamed with dismay; but the more experienced laughed at his notion of what the true old Irish skull would bear, and the victor took him home to supper and bed; i.e., stirabout and straw.

He came to a fall in a river, eight feet high, and saw salmon glittering prismatic in the sun, like rainbows, as they leaped; but they struck the descending column a foot too low, struggled in it a moment, then came down as stupid as tin fish: and here he saw a sight he might have travelled creation and never seen elsewhere — a corpse-like man lying flat in a coffin, and towed gingerly up to the fall by his bare-armed wife straddling on a rock; the man caught the salmon on the ground, one after the other, by the belly, with a cart rope and three

barbed hooks that would have landed a whale. 'Twas his own coffin, ordered by his uneasy wife, with true Hibernian judgment, the moment he was expected to die. But the salmon came up from the sea, and began to leap like mad. Pat put off dying directly, and took to poaching. We are creatures of habit, and salmon-slaughtering was his custom at that time of year, not dying.

The woman being dark — partly with dirt — James asked her for a fish supper. She boiled him half a salmon, and threw the rest to the pig; but she told James that in the big towns there were fools who would give four shillings a hundred-weight for the trash. Within fifteen miles of the capital he witnessed two abductions, one real, one sham; both commonish customs. The imitation was the lineal descendant of the real, and the men hallooed and galloped so much alike in both pageants, and the two brides screamed so much alike, that he never knew for certain which was the pseudo-Sabine, which the real, — and never will. His feet were bleeding; his clothes only just hung together; his little heart was faint; when at last he mounted a hill, and looked down on Dublin, which, by its buildings, its size, and its blue-slated roofs, far transcended all that he had ever imagined of a mortal city. The town did not then overflow into pretty villas. Mud cabins prevailed up to the city gates, and from them this weary, wondering child plunged into streets and mansions. At the very first street he stopped, and asked a decent man where Lord Altham lived. The decent man met this question by another: "How was he to know?" The same answer was returned in the next street, and the next; and this poor little mite of humanity wandered up and down in vain. Then a great and new fear fell on him: this Dublin was not a town like Ross; it was another

world; a world of stone and slate, and hard hearts, not like the simple country folk. He might as well grope for his father in all Ireland as in this wilderness of labyrinths of stone. Snubbed, sneered at, rejected on all sides, he cried his sick heart and his hungry stomach to sleep in a church porch; and so he passed his first night in the capital.

Day after day the same, till at last he found a dark woman, a gentleman's cook, who listened to his tale, and gave him some broken victuals. She was an Englishwoman; her name was Martha. One day Jemmy came for his dinner, as usual, but was disappointed. Kathleen, the kitchen-maid, informed him, with a marked elevation of the nose, that "madam" had gone out for the day, and locked up the safe, like a mane, miserly Sassenach as she was, bad cess to her and all her dhirty breed; but she'd be back again by five. Hungry Jemmy attended faithfully at five, in spite of the rain, and great was his surprise and awe when two chairmen brought up a chair, and there emerged from it — a duchess? No; but a fair imitation thereof; Mrs. Martha, with her income on her back, and two little black patches on her cheeks. She smiled at his adoration, paid the chairmen loftily, who retired with expressions of adulation, and sly, satirical looks at each other, and she took James by the hand, and led him to her sanctum. "Sir," said she, instead of "child," or "my dear," as heretofore, "I have been visiting my friends; and, from one to another, I have found ye my Lord Altham; as luck would have it, a countrywoman of mine, one Elizabeth Grainger, she lives in the house: but she tells me she shall give her notice." — "O, madam! dear, good madam!" began Jemmy. "Nay, sir," said she, "but you must hear me out. I'm afear'd you will not be so welcome as you ought to be. You are as sensible

a little gentleman as e'er I saw; so I'll e'en tell you the truth; Mrs. Betty did let me know my lord is in ill hands; this dame Gregory and her daughter have got him; the old woman goes about her own house like a servant; but miss, she is mistress, and games with the quality, and spends money like dirt: they are betrothed to each other, and his wife laying sick in the town, on her way back to England. Poor soul, she rues the day she ever saw this hole of a country, I'll go bail. They look for her to die — for their convenience. Well, if I was her, I'd spite 'em; I'd play the woman, and outlive the brute and the hussy both, saving your presence."

"O, madam, an if it please you, where does my father live?"

"'Tis in Frapper Lane, the corner house. What, will you be going, and no supper? Nay, then, God speed you. Give me a kiss, sweetheart. So. Your breath is honey. Sir," said she, courtesying to him, all of a sudden, "I do wish you well. When you come into your estate, sir, prithee remember Martha Knatchbull, that took your part when fortune frowned."

"Ay, that I will, good, kind lady," said James, still overpowered by her glorious costume; and so he shuffled off, limping fast, and, in the hunger of his longing heart, forgot his hungry belly for a time.

To give the reader some idea of the house he was going to, I will sketch the domestic performances from nine P.M. on the previous evening. Lord Altham and friends had a drinking bout, at the end of which he was assisted to bed, and his friends sent home in chairs. But the ladies did not drink; they gamed their lives away. Mistress Anne Gregory received Lady Dace and Mistress Carmichael, and other ladies gloriously dressed, and, at first starting, most polite and ceremonious; they drank tea, and soon warmed into scandal, each accusing

some other lady of her own especial vice, till at last they got upon politics. Inflamed by this topic, they soon boiled over; voices rose over voices, not a single tongue was mute a moment; and such was the Babel, that, at last, the fat, lazy lap-dog wriggled himself erect, and looked furiously at the disturbers of his peace. Then a Neptune arose to still the raging voices; in other words, Mrs. Betty set out the card-tables. Down they sat, and soon their eyes were gleaming, and their flesh trembling with excitement. Mistress Anne Gregory held bad cards; she had to pawn ring after ring, — for these ladies, being well acquainted with each other, never played on parole, — and she kept bemoaning her bad luck. "Betty, I knew how 'twould be. The parson called to-day. This odious chair, why will you stick me in it? Stand further, girl. I always lose when you look on." Mrs. Betty tossed her head, and went behind another lady. Miss Gregory still lost, and had to pawn her snuff-box to Lady Dace. She consoled herself by an insinuation. "My lady, you touched your wedding-ring; that was a sign to your partner here."

"Nay, madam, 'twas but a sign my finger itched. But, if you go to that, you spoke a word began with H. Then she knew you had the king of hearts."

"That is like miss, here," said another matron; "she rubs her chair when she hath matadore in hand."

"Set a thief to catch a thief, madam," was miss's ingenious and polished reply.

"Hey-dey!" cries one; "here's spadillo got a mark on the back; a child might know it in the dark. Mistress Pigot, I wish you'd be pleased to pare your nails."

In short, they said things to each other all night, the slightest of which, among men, would have filled the Phœnix Park next morning with drawn swords, but it went for little here; they were all cheats, and knew it,

and knew the others knew it, and didn't care. It was four o'clock before they broke up, huddled on their cloaks and hoods, and their chairs took them home with cold feet and aching heads.

At twelve next day, Miss Gregory was prematurely disturbed by her lap-dog, barking like a demon for his breakfast. She stretched, gaped, unglued her eyes, and rang for Betty. No answer. She rang again, and beat the wall viciously with her slipper. Betty came in yawning.

"Here, child, let in some light. Nay, not so much; wouldst blind me? I'm dead of the vapors. Get me a dram of citron-water. So. Now bring me a looking-glass. I will lie abed. Alack! I look frightfully to-day. If ever I touch a card again! Didst ever see such luck as mine? Four matadores, and lose codille!"

"Nay, madam," said Mrs. Betty, who was infected with the tastes of her betters, "with submission, you played bad cards."

"Hoity toity, wench!" cried the lady, "was ever such assurance? What is the world coming to?" And she packed her off contemptuously to get her tea and cream.

Betty turned pale with wrath, but retired.

Once outside the door, she said, "I'll be even with the jade. I'm as good as she."

Miss Gregory was at her glass when Betty returned with the tea. "Madam," said she, with a sly sneer, "the goldsmith waits below to know if you will redeem the silver cup."

"There, give him that for interest."

"And my Lady Dace has sent her maid."

"That is for her winnings. Never was such a dun. Here, take these ten pistoles my lord left for the wine merchant. They are all light, thank Heaven!"

At two, being half dressed, and the room tidied, but

not a window opened, she received the visit of a fop. He paid her hyperbolical compliments, at which you should have seen Mrs. Betty's lip curl, and was consulted as to where she should put her patches; but was driven out, like chaff before the wind, by a creature more attractive; to wit, a mercer with silks, patterns, and laces from Paris; so the toilet was not complete at four, when a footman knocked at the door with "Madam, dinner stays."

"Then the cook must keep it back. I never can have time to dress; and I am sure no living woman takes less."

However, she soon came down, distended with an enormous hoop, glorious with brocaded skirt and quilted petticoat, and cocked up on red, high-heeled shoes; bedizened, belaced, powdered, pomatumed, pulvilioed, patched, perfumed, and everything else — except washed; yet less savage than the men in one respect. The commode and all the pyramidal, scaffolded heads had gone out; her hair was her own, and, though long, was compressed into a small compass; whereas the gentlemen had full-bottomed wigs that smothered their heads, contracted their cheeks, flowed over their shoulders, and befloured their backs.

My Lord Altham and two or three other gentlemen were there, and three ladies. Lord Altham, a little dark man with a loud voice, received her with great respect, and told her they waited only for his brother, Captain Richard Annesley.

"Nay, he will not come, methinks," said she. "He and I had words t'other day."

"Nay, then let the churl hang. Who waits?"

A flaring footman appeared as if his string had been pulled.

"Bid them serve the dinner."

"I will, my lord."

For the conversation during dinner, see Swift's "Polite

Conversation." You will be a gainer by the exchange; for the discourse at Lord Altham's board was half as coarse, and not half so witty.

Soon after dinner the host proposed "Church and State."

From that moment the ladies were evidently on their guard, and ready for flight.

"Parson," says my lord, "I'll tell you a merry story."

The ladies rose like one, and retired. My lord, having achieved his end, for at this time of night the bottle was his mistress, until it became his master, substituted a toast for his song: —

> "The finest sight beneath the moon
> Is to see the ladies quit the room."

He then ordered the present bottles and glasses to be exchanged for others that would not stand upright, the stems of the glasses having been knocked off, and the decanters being made like a soda-water bottle. This insured so brisk a circulation, that, although they were gentlemen who had all "made their heads" in early life, the claret began to tell, as was proved by the swift alternations of superfluous ire and hyperbolical affection and peals of idiotic laughter; when, in the midst of the din, an altercation was heard in the hall. The disputants were three, and each voice had its own key: first there was a sweet little quavering soprano, appealing to a flaming footman; then there was a flaming footman objurgating the cherubic voice, an octave lower; then came the commanding alto of Mrs. Betty.

"What is to do?" roared Lord Altham.

"Why," said Mrs. Betty, seizing this opportunity, "'tis a young gentleman that hath travelled an hundred miles to see my lord, and my lord's valet denied him, being stained with travel; but 'twas ill done, and him of kin to my lord."

"Of kin to my lord! Nay, then, Mistress Betty, he is welcome to all here."

Betty, who had her cue from the English cook, and who was already interested in the fair, sorrowful young face and golden hair, made no more ado, but led James into the room by the hand. The numerous lights in the candelabra dazzled him at first, and the fine clothes and perukes awed him; he hid against Betty's capacious apron, that descended from waist to ankle. Then he peered, and saw Lord Altham standing up, looking half pleased, half vexed; he gave a loud cry, as if his heart was flying out of his body, stretched out his arms, and flew to him. "O father! father!" The sorrow he had endured, the joy and infinite trust that swallowed all sorrow up at sight of his father, both spoke in that one wild cry; it thrilled; it startled; it sent Mrs. Betty's apron to her eyes in a moment, and pierced the heart even of this silly, brutal lord.

"My boy! my sweet Jemmy!" he cried, and sat down and folded him in his arm, and kissed him tenderly, with a mawkish tear or two.

The guests then stood up respectfully, and drank welcome to the young gentleman. "Not forgetting Mrs. Betty, that brought him to us," said the chaplain, who had a sheep's-eye to her and her savings: she was a Sassenach, and sure to have savings; Irish savings were not.

"Father," said Jemmy, "they used me very cruel at that school: bad luck to it! They were always bating me, and the masther would not rise a hand for me, bekase you sent him no money for my schoolin'. Why didn't you send him his money?"

This, which would have made a Sassenach father blush, did but divert my lord and his company. "I kept it for yourself, Jemmy," said he.

"My lord is a great saver, sir. Long life to him!" said another.

"He is putting it by to build a church," suggested the chaplain.

"'Twill be a church with a chimney, then," said Betty, who was somewhat free of her tongue. This sally was mightily approved by that unceremonious company. When the laughter ceased, the sweet little voice of Jemmy crept timidly in.

"Father avick, does my mother live here?"

Now this question made the company very uncomfortable. It quite staggered Lord Altham for a minute. But he burst out furiously, "Thou hast no mother."

"Nay, father; then what hath come of the gentlewoman that had red shoes, two pair, made for me in Ross; and the likely woman that brought me woollen hose she had made for me herself, and called me her child?" Then, seeing my lord silent, and much disturbed, he bethought himself, and said, "Well, if my mothers are both dead, I must love thee all the more."

Betty, who was watching Lord Altham's face very keenly all the time, now stepped forward and took James away. She fed him, and then proceeded to ablutions. The cleanliness of his skin, dusty, but not grimed, surprised her; but, above all, his head. "Gramercy," said she, "not one to be seen, and they swarm in my lady's. To be sure, that same powder is a convenient habitation."

She put him to bed; and, being a notable woman, sat up half the night and made him a loose habit and a little hat. With this, and clean linen, and a cambric tie, she brought him to Lord Altham while Miss Gregory was abed. Lord Altham was surprised and pleased, and took him out in a chair and had him shod on the spot, and measured for a fine suit from top to toe. He was

petted by everybody, and especially by Miss Gregory. This was a very clever young lady; she was not going to risk Lord Altham's affections by snubbing his son, a pretty, amiable boy. Mrs. Betty's shot missed fire; Miss Gregory went with the stream, and had two riding-suits made, one for James, and one for herself, and she got him a pony, and he was her cavalier. They were the glory of Dublin and the Phœnix, and had often a crowd at their tails. Their accoutrement was as follows: each had a beaver hat, gold laced, looped, and with a handsome feather; a coat and waistcoat blazing with gold lace and gold buttons; only the lady ended in a petticoat of the same stuff, clinging close to her as a blister. She had also a little powdered peruke like a man; her object being to seem a smart cavalier by day, and a finicking, fine lady, hooped and furbelowed by night. The only drawback was that this exquisite costume brought her mercer's bill to a climax, and he demanded payment of the following trifles, and threatened law: Fine Holland smock, one guinea; Marseilles quilted silk petticoat, three pound six; hooped petticoat, two pound five; Italian quilted ditto, ten pounds; mantua and petticoat of French brocade, seventy-eight pounds; English stays, three pounds; Italian fan, five pounds; a laced head, of Flanders point, sixty pounds; silk stockings, one pound; a black-laced hood, and a French silk *à la mode* hood, six pounds; French garters, one pound five; French bosom knot, one pound twelve; beaver hat and feather, three pounds; ditto for James, two pounds; embroidered riding-suit of Lyons velvet and gold lace, forty-seven pounds; ditto for my young lord, nineteen pounds; sable muff, five pounds; red shoes (English), two guineas; tippet, seven guineas; French kid gloves, two shillings and sixpence; with innumerable other articles, all for outside wear, the body

linen being in the proportion of the bread to the sack in Falstaff's tavern bill. Many of these articles could have been had for half the price, if the lady would have listened to Dr. Swift, and bought Irish goods; but she would almost rather have gone bare. No, she was Irish to the core; so everything she wore must come from England or the Continent.

This bill, and the man's threats, brought on a fit of the vapors; another fashionable importation. She rode out with Jemmy one day to shake them off, and they met a gentleman riding, in a scarlet coat and a hat like a bishop's mitre. He drew up, and saluted Miss Gregory stiffly, and cast a sour look at Jemmy. "Odzooks," said he, "have you got that boy in the house?"

"What matters it to you, sir," said the lady, firing up, "since you do never come there?"

The officer explained that he and his brother, Lord Altham, had been out for some time. "To tell the truth, we are like cat and dog. Nought but want of money brings us together. You will see me now every day," said he, with a sneer; then, lowering his voice, "Madam, I desire some private conference with you. Will it please you to be at home this afternoon?"

"Certainly, sir; in one hour."

When he was gone, she asked the boy if he knew the gentleman. James answered, very gravely, that it was his uncle, Richard Annesley, and no friend to him; "Never gave me a good word nor a look in his life."

"Perhaps you are in his way," said she, with a laugh.

She gave Captain Annesley the *tête-à-tête* he had asked for, and he came to the point in a moment. Lord Altham and himself were both in want of money, and, in order to get it, had patched up their quarrels: parading Jemmy about the streets of Dublin was unseasonable, and just the thing to stop the business, or at least

retard it. The money-lenders might hesitate, and say there was another interest to be thought of.

"Nay," said Miss Gregory, "that would never do, for here I am threatened for two hundred pounds and more."

Captain Annesley worked on her cupidity till she consented to part father and son; but she refused to do it with a high hand, or with brutal severity. She could never urge the father to turn his son out of the house. Richard Annesley, as artful as he was unscrupulous, offered her his house at Inchicore, and they settled that Lord Altham should be taken out there, and every means employed to separate him from James, till the money was raised. This artful pair now put their heads together every day, and the first thing done was to discharge Mrs. Betty. She went back to England, leaving James in the house. Next, all the servants were discharged, except two, who were sent on to Inchicore, and an old woman left in charge of the house and Jemmy.

Miss Gregory so worked on Lord Altham that he hid from James where he was going, stipulating only, like a sot as he was, that Richard should look to the boy, and see he wanted for nothing.

After all, the money-lenders hesitated on account of the previous mortgages; and my lord remained in hiding with Mrs. Gregory and her daughter, and had to cut down his expenses, and live upon his rents.

James Annesley stayed in the house, hoping every day he should be sent for, till one day an execution was put in for rent: his riding-suit was seized, and he was turned out into the streets, with nothing but what he carried on his back.

Then he began to wonder and fear. He ran to Mrs. Martha, whom he had neglected in his prosperity. She had left the town. He was amazed, confused, heart-sick.

He wandered to and fro, wondering what this might mean. He had to sell his fine suit for a plain one, and a very little money, and, when that was done, starvation stared him in the face. Deserted and penniless, he had hard work to live. At first a playmate, one Byrne, brought him morsels of food in secret, and lodged him in a hayloft. Then he got into the college, and used to run errands, and black shoes. Vacation came, and even that resource failed; and then he held horses for a half-penny or a farthing, in Ormond Market, and was almost in rags: no other ragged boy so unhappy as he, since under those rags there beat the heart of a little gentleman, and rankled the deep sense of injustice and unnatural cruelty. Of late he had avoided speaking of his parentage; but one day insults dragged it out of him. A bigger boy was abusing him because a gentleman, liking his face, had selected him to hold his horse: the boy called him a blackguard, a beggar, and other opprobrious terms. "You lie!" said James, losing all patience: "I am come of better folk than thou. My father is a lord, and I am heir to great estates, and have been served by thy betters, and so should now, if the world was not so wicked." These words did not fall unheeded; henceforth he was the scoff of all the dirty boys in the place, and they cried "My lord!" after him. One Farrell, that kept a shop on the quay, heard them at it, and said to his shopman, "Why, I see no hump on him: the boy is straight enough, and fair, if he were cleaned." He called James to him, and asked him why they called him "My lord." The boy hung his head, and would not say at first, he was so used to be jeered, but, being pressed, and seeing a kindly face enough, began to tell his tale. But Farrell interrupted him. "Lord Altham," said he, "I know him — to my cost. Well, I do remember one time I went to Dunmaine for my money, and

got mulled claret instead on't; there was a child there, with my lady and his nurse." James said, eagerly, that was himself. "Nay, then," said Farrell, "why not seek thy mother, Lady Altham, if she be thy mother?"

"Oh, sir," said James, "I thought my mother was gone back to England. Dear, good sir, have pity on me, and take me to her, if she is in this wicked place."

"Child," said the man, "I know that my Lady Altham sojourned with her friend, Alderman King; but you are not fit to go there: come you home with me." So he took him home, and bade his wife clean him, and lend him an old suit of his son that was away at school. The wife complied with no great cordiality; and Farrell sent a line about him to Alderman King, and then called at the alderman's house, and asked for my Lady Altham. "Nay," said the alderman, "my lady sailed for England a se'nnight ago. But, Master Farrell, what tale is this you bring me? Why, my lady never had a son."

"Oh!" cried James, as if he had been struck.

Farrell looked blank, but said, "Sure, your worship is mistook."

"I tell ye, Master Farrell, she was eight months in this house, and discoursed of all her troubles, and she never breathed a word about a son of hers. Did she, Mistress Avice?" turning to his housekeeper.

"She did, to *me*, sir," said the woman, coolly. "My lady was my countrywoman, and opened her heart to me. She spoke once of her son, and said the greatest of her grief was she could never see him."

Here the alderman was called away, and Farrell took James home in tears. "Keep a stout heart, sir," said he: "your mother is gone, but I'll soon find your father, if he is above ground."

Farrell wanted to keep him, but his wife would not hear of it. "We have lost above fifty pounds by that

Lord Altham already. I'll have none of his breed in this house; bad scran to the dirty clan of 'em!"

Now Farrell had a friend, a very honest fellow, one Purcell; so he told him the whole story one day, over a pipe. "Let me see him," said Purcell. "If I like his looks, — why, we can afford to keep something young about us. But I must see him first."

So these two went to one likely place and another, and presently Farrell saw Jemmy in Smithfield riding a horse, and pointed him out to Purcell. "Stand you aside," said Purcell, "and be not seen." He took a good look at the boy, and liked his face. "Child," said he rather shortly, "what is your name?"

"James Annesley, sir."

"Whose son are you?"

"Alas! sir," said James, "prithee do not ask me: it makes me cry so. I'm a lost boy."

Then the honest man's bowels were moved for the child; but he would not show it all at once. "Are you Lord Altham's son?" said he, a little roughly. "Indeed, then, I am, sir," said the boy, and looked him in the face. "Then," says Purcell, still a little roughly, "get you off that horse; for, if you will be a good boy, I'll take you home with me, and," says he warmly, "you shall never want while I have it." Then Jemmy stared at him, and the next moment fell on his knees in the market-place, and gave him a thousand blessings; "For oh, sir," said he, "I am almost lost." And he trembled greatly.

"Have a good heart, sir," said Purcell, and took him by the hand, all shabby and dirty as he was, and brought him home to his wife that was busy cooking, being a right good housewife. "There," says he, "Mary, here's a little gentleman for thee." So she looked at him, and smiled, and asked who he was. "Thou'lt know anon,"

said he; "but take care of him as if he was thine own." Now she was not like Farrell's wife, but one that had a good man, and knew it. "Go thy ways," said she, and gave him a merry push, "and come thou here no more till supper-time." Then he went away, and she soon had a great pot on the fire, and made the boy wash in a two-eared tub, and put decent clothes on him, and drew all his history from him with her kind words and ways; and, when the honest man came home, he started at the door, for there sat his wife knitting, in her best apron, and aside her a lovely little gentleman with golden hair, leaning on her shoulder, and they were prattling together; and one was "my child," and the other was "mammy," already. It was the happiest fireside in Ireland that night; and it deserved to be.

Here was a respite to all James Annesley's troubles. He grew, he fattened, he brightened, he loved his mammy and stout John Purcell, and they loved him.

Unfortunately, Farrell found out Lord Altham at Inchicore, and went to dun him; and told him about Jemmy. Lord Altham was shocked, and promised to remunerate both Farrell and Purcell as soon as he could raise money. Meantime he blustered to Miss Gregory, and she must have told Richard Annesley; for one September afternoon there walked into Purcell's shop a gentleman, with a gun and a setter, and inquired, "Is there not one Purcell lives here?"

"Yes, sir," said Purcell, "I am the man."

Then the gentleman called for a pot of beer, and sat down by the fire, inviting Purcell to partake. When the gentleman had drunk a drop, he asked Purcell if he had not a boy called James Annesley. Purcell said yes, and the gentleman said he desired to see him. Now Jemmy had been ailing a little, and was in the parlor, with Mrs. Purcell, in an arm-chair, by the fire; so Purcell went in

to tell him, and found him in tears. "Why, what is the matter?" said Purcell. Says the boy, "It is that gentleman: the sight of him has put such a dread on me, I don't know what to do with myself."

"Nay," said Purcell, "the gentleman is civil enough. Come and speak to him." So he came very unwillingly. The gentleman said, "So, James, how do you do?" The boy answered, stiffly, "Sir, I thank you, I am pretty well." The gentleman said, "And I am glad you have fallen into such good hands." The boy said, gravely, "Sir, I have reason to thank God for it. They are kinder to me than my own kin." The gentleman said he must not say so, and asked him if he knew him.

"I know you well," said he, "you are my uncle, Richard Annesley." And, at the first opportunity, slipped back to his "mammy," as he called her. He was all trembling, and she asked him why he was so, and he said, "That's a wicked man: he hates me; he hates me. He never came near me but to hurt me. I'd liever meet the devil. Some day he will kill me."

Whilst Dame Purcell was comforting him, and telling him nobody should harm him under her wing, Richard Annesley treated Purcell, and told him Lord Altham should recompense him: but Purcell declined that favor, and said rather contemptuously, "When he is man enough to take his own flesh and blood into the house, he knows where to find him: but I ask no pay: I can keep a lord's son, if his father can't, and I can love one, if his father can't: for there never was a better boy stood in the walls of a house."

Three months after this, Lord Altham had a short illness, and died. He was to be buried at Christchurch, and the sexton told Mrs. Purcell the afternoon before the funeral. They buried at night in those days. Mrs. Purcell had not the heart to keep it from the boy; he

turned very pale, but did not cry. Only he would go to the funeral. Purcell dissuaded him, and then he began to wring his hands. Mrs. Purcell had her way for once, and got him weepers to attend.

It was a fine funeral, by torchlight. Velvets, plumes, mutes, flambeaux. One thing only was wanting — mourners. The tenants of his vast estates — his numerous boon companions — his wife — his betrothed — his brothers, Lord Anglesey and Richard Annesley — all drinking, or gaming, or minding their own business. There stood by this wretched noble's open grave only two that cared: an old coachman, Weedon, and the poor boy he had so basely abandoned. The rest were strangers, brought there by hard curiosity.

When the coffin began to sink out of sight, the tender heart of the deserted one almost burst with grief and wasted love.

"O MY FATHER! MY FATHER!" cried the desolate child: and that wild cry of woe rang in ears that remembered it, and spoke of it long after, and under strange circumstances no one could foresee at that time.

When he came back all in tears, Purcell said, "There, dame, I knew how 'twould be," and he was almost angry.

"But 'tis best so, John," said she: "dear heart, when he comes to be old, would you have him remember he could not find a tear for his father, and him no more?"

"O mammy, mammy," said James, "only one old man and me to weep for him; those he loved before me, never cared for him," and then his tears burst out afresh.

A day or two after this a message came to James Annesley that his uncle wanted to see him, at Mr. Jones's in the market. The boy refused to go. "It is not for any good, I know," said he. But at last he con-

sented to accompany Mr. Purcell, if he would go armed. Stout-hearted Purcell laughed at his fears, but yielded to his entreaties, and took a thick stick. James held him fast by the skirt all the way. In the entry to Jones's three fellows slouched against the wall. "Oho!" thought John Purcell.

Mr. Annesley met him, and Purcell took off his hat, and Mr. Annesley gave him good-morning, and then, without more ceremony, called to one of the fellows to seize that thieving rogue, and take him to the proper place.

"Who do you call a thief?" said Purcell, sternly.

"Confound you," says the gentleman, "I am not speaking to you." Then he ordered the fellows again to take Jemmy away. But Purcell put the boy between his legs, and raised his stick high. "The first of you lays a hand on him, by God I'll knock his brains out." Hearing him raise his voice in anger, one or two people came about the entry, and the bullies sneaked off. "You a gentleman!" said John Purcell, "and would go to destroy this poor creature you were never man enough to maintain."

"Go you and talk to his nurse," said Richard Annesley, spitefully; "she knows more of him than you do."

"This is idle chat," said John Purcell. "He has neither father, mother, nor nurse, left in this kingdom, but my dame and me. Let us go home, Jemmy. We have fallen in ill company."

But from that day there were always fellows lurking about John Purcell's house; sometimes bailiffs, or constables or sharks disguised as such; and the boy one day lost his nerve and ran away: he entered the service of a Mr. Tighe, and sent word to Purcell that his life was not safe so long as his uncle knew where to find him, and he also feared to bring him and his mammy into trouble.

For this cowardice he paid dear. He had been watched, and an opportunity was taken to seize him one day in the open street, by men disguised as bailiffs, on a charge of theft, and, instead of being taken to a court, he was brought to Richard Annesley's house. Richard Annesley charged him with stealing a silver spoon. The boy was quiet till he saw that fatal face, and then he began to scream, and to cry, "He will kill me, or transport me." Annesley's eyes glittered fiendishly. "Ay, thou knave," said he, "I have been insulted enough for thee, and my very title denied me, because of thy noise. Away with him!"

Then the men put him into a coach, and took him along by the quay, screaming and crying for help, "They will kill me; they will transport me, because I am Lord Altham's son:" and people followed the coach, and murmured loud. But the men were quick and resolute, and, while one told some lie or other to the people, the others got him into a boat, and pulled lustily out to a ship that lay ready to cross the bar, for all this had been timed beforehand; and, once on board that wooden hell, he had no chance. He was thrust into the hold.

The law protected Englishmen from this, in theory, but not in practice. Some agent of Richard Annesley's indented James Annesley as his nearest friend, acting *at his request*, and the sole record of this act of villany read like an act of plain, unobjectionable business. He was kept in the hold, and his cries unregarded. The ship spread her pinions, and away. Then the boy was allowed to come on deck, and take his last look of Ireland. He asked a sailor boy where they were going. "Bound for Philadelphia," was the reply. At the bare word the poor little wretch uttered shriek upon shriek and ran aft, to throw himself into the sea. The man at the wheel caught him by his skirt, and had much ado to

hold him, till a sailor ran up, and they got him on board again, screaming, and biting like a wild cat: the gentle boy was quite changed by desperation; for Philadelphia, though it means "brotherly love" in Greek, meant "white slavery" to poor betrayed creatures from the mother country.

Finally, after superhuman struggles, and shrieks of despair, so piteous that even the rugged sailors began to look blank, he went off into a dead swoon, and was white as ashes, and his lips blue. "He is dead," was the cry.

"Lord forbid!" said the captain. "Stand aloof, ye fools, and give him air."

"O humane captain!" says my reader; but "O good trader captain!" would be nearer the mark. This Richard Annesley, to save his purse, had given the captain an interest in the boy's life. The captain was to sell him over the water, and pocket the money. This fatal oversight elevated a human creature into merchandise. The worthy captain set himself in earnest to keep it alive. He fanned his merchandise, sprinkled his merchandise, and, when his merchandise came to, and with a stare and a loud scream went off into heart-rending and distracting cries, he comforted his merchandise, and gave it a sup of rum and water, and hurried it down into a cabin, and set a guard on it night and day, with orders to be kind to it, but very watchful; this done, he gave his mind to sailing the good ship James of Dublin.

But next day he was informed that the merchandise would not eat, nor drink, but was resolved to die. "Drat him! drench him!" said the stout-hearted captain.

"Drench him yourself," said the mate. "I'm sick on't."

Then the captain bade the cook prepare a savory dish,

and brought it down to James; "Eat this, sir," said he, as one used to be obeyed. The young gentleman made no reply, but his eyes gleamed. The captain drew his hanger with one hand, and stuck a two-pronged fork into a morsel with the other. "Eat that, ye contrary toad," said he, "or I'll make minced collops of thee." The boy took the morsel. "So!" said the captain, sneering over his shoulder at the mate. The boy spat it furiously in his face. "May God sink thy ship, and burn thy soul, thou knave, that wouldst steal away a nobleman's son, and sell him for a slave."

The captain drew back a moment, like a dog a hen has flown at, and had hard work not to cut him in two; but he forbore, and said, "Starve then, and feed the fishes;" and so left the cabin. The mate, who was at his back all the time, told the boatswain young master was a nobleman's son, and was being spirited away, and there was "foul play" in it. Some remarks were made which it was intended the captain should hear. He took them up directly. "A nobleman's son," said he; "ay, but only a merrybegot; and so given to thieving, he will do no good at home. Why, 'twas his own uncle shipped him — for his good." This quieted the men directly, and, from that moment, they made light of the matter.

When James was downright faint with hunger, the captain took quite another way with him; went to him, and said he feared there was some mistake, and he was sorry he had been led to take him on board; but the matter should be set right at landing. "No, no," said James, "I shall be bound as a slave. May Heaven revenge me on my wicked uncle! I see now why he has done this — to rob me of my estate and my title."

"Indeed, I begin to think he is to blame," said the captain. "But why take fright at a word, sir? None

can make you a slave for life, as the negroes are, but only an apprentice for a time."

"I am beholden to you, sir," said James; "but call it what you will, 'tis slavery; and I'd liever die. But promise to send me back by the first ship, and I will give you a hatful of money when I come to my rights, and pray for you all my days."

"Ay, but if I do so, will you eat and drink, and be of good heart?"

"That will I, sir."

"Then 'tis a bargain."

They shook hands upon it; and, from that hour, were good friends. James was treated like a guest; he ate and drank so heartily, that the captain began to wince at his appetite; and, in a word, what with the sea air, plentiful diet, and a mind relieved from fear of slavery, the young gentleman's cheeks plumped out, and became rosy, he grew an inch and a half in height, and landed at Philadelphia a picture of a little Briton.

The planters boarded the ship; the captain threw off the mask, and sold him directly, for a high price, to one Drummond.

James raged, and cried, and demanded to be taken before a justice.

Then, for the first time, the captain produced papers, all prepared by Richard Annesley, under legal advice. The colony wanted labor, and was ill-disposed to sift the evidence that furnished it; it all ended in Drummond carrying his prize home to Newcastle County.

Next morning, at five o'clock, James found himself engaged, with other slaves, black and white, cutting pipe-staves, and an overseer standing by, provided with a whip of very superior construction to anything he ever saw in Ireland.

Being only a boy, and new at the work, he was first

ridiculed, then threatened, and, before the day ended, the whip fell on his shoulders, stinging, branding, burning his back much, his heart more; for then this noble boy felt, with all his soul and all his body, what he was come to: an ox — an ass — a beast — a slave!

CHAPTER II.

In this miserable condition of servitude, James Annesley remained nearly seven years, having been indented for an extreme period; and many a sigh he heaved, and many a tear he shed in solitude, thinking of what he had been, and what he had a right to be, and what he was. But, being now a full-grown young man, tall, and very robust, he could do his work, and his misery was alleviated by caution; and, above all, by the blessed thought that his servitude was drawing to an end; since a white man could only be bound for a limited term.

But let all shallow statesmen, and pedantic lawyers, who trifle with the equal rights of humanity, be warned that you cannot play fast and loose with things so sacred. The mother country, in its stupidity, allowed its citizens to be made slaves for a time; the Pilgrim Fathers and their grandchildren, though no men ever valued liberty more in their own persons, or talked more about it, had not that *disinterested* respect for it which marks their nobler descendants; and so they, by a by-law or custom, enlarged the term of servitude. This they contrived by ordering that, if one of these temporary slaves misbehaved grossly, and, above all, attempted escape, his term of servitude could be enlarged in proportion, by judges who were in the interest of the planters.

So the game was, when the white slave's term of servitude drew near, to make his life intolerable; then, in his despair, he rebelled, or ran for it, and was recaptured, and re-enslaved by this by-law passed in the colony.

"Where's there's a multitude there's a mixture," and not every planter played this heartless dodge; but too many did, and no man more barbarously than this Drummond. By the help of an unscrupulous overseer, who did and said whatever he was ordered, he starved, he insulted, he flogged, he made his slaves' life intolerable; and so, in a fit of desperation, James started one night for the Delaware River; he armed himself with a little bill-hook, for he was quite resolved not to be taken alive.

In the morning they found he was gone, and followed him, horse and foot. But they did not catch him, for rather a curious reason: he had the ill-luck to miss his road, and got to the Susquehanna instead.

He found his mistake, when too late; but he did not give up all hope; for he saw some ships, and a town, into which he resolved to penetrate at nightfall: it was then about ten o'clock. Meantime, he thought it best to hide; and, coming to two roads, one of which turned to his right, and passed through a wood, he turned off that way, and lay down in shelter, and unseen, though close to the roadside. Here fatigue overpowered him, and he went to sleep, fast as a church, and slept till four in the afternoon. Then he awoke, with voices in his ears, and, peeping through the leafy screen, he saw, with surprise, that there was company close to him: there was a man haltering a horse to a tree near him, and another already haltered; a gentlewoman in a riding-habit stood looking on, while another man drew provisions and wine from some saddle-bags, and spread a cloth on the grass, and made every preparation for a repast.

Then they all three sat down and enjoyed themselves, so that poor hungry James sighed involuntarily, and peeped through the leaves. The lady heard him, turned, saw him, screamed, pointed at him, and in a moment the

men were upon him with drawn swords, crying, "Traitor! Spy!"

But James whipped behind a tree, and parleyed. "No traitor, sir, but a poor runaway slave, who never set eyes on you before." The men hesitated, and he soon convinced them of his innocence. One of them laughed, and said, "Why, then there's nought to fear from thee."

The lady, however, still anxious, cross-questioned him herself. His answers satisfied her, his appearance pleased her, and it ended to his advantage; they made him sit down with them, and eat and drink heartily.

At last the lady let out they were fugitives, too, and could feel for him, and she said, "We are going on board a ship bound for Holland. She lies at anchor, waiting for us; and, if you can run with us, we will e'en take you on board. But in sooth we must lose no time." They started. The gentleman had the lady behind him, and James ran with his hand on the other horse's mane; but losing breath, the man, who was well mounted, took him up behind him. Night fell, and then they went more slowly, and James, to ease the good horse, walked by his side.

But presently there was a fierce galloping of horses behind them, and lights seemed flying at them from behind. The lady looked back, and screamed, "'Tis he himself; we are lost!"

The men had only time to dismount and draw their swords, when the party was upon them, with a score of blades flashing in the torchlight. The men defended themselves, and James, forgetting it was no quarrel of his, laid about him with his bill-hook: but the combat was too unequal. In three minutes the lady, in a dead swoon, was laid before one horseman, her lover and his servant were bound upon their own horses, and James

fared worse still, for his hands were tied together, and fastened to a horse's tail.

In this wretched plight they were carried to the nearest village, and well guarded for the night in separate rooms.

At daybreak they were marched again, and James Annesley, in that horrible attitude of a captive felon, was drawn at a horse's tail through four hooting villages, and lodged in Chester jail.

Law did not halt here: they were all four put to the bar, and then first he learned, by the evidence, who his companions were, and what he had been doing when he drew bill-hook in their defence. The lady was daughter of a trader in this very town of Chester. Her father, finding her in love with some one beneath her, had compelled her to marry a rich planter. She hated him, and, in an evil hour, listened to her lover, who persuaded her to fly with all she could lay her hands on. The money and jewels were found in the saddle-bags. The husband was vindictive, the crime twofold. The guilty pair, the servant, and James, who was taken fighting on their side, were condemned.

James made an effort to separate his fate from the others. He told the judge who he was, and what master he had run away from; declared it was a mere accident his being there; he had been surprised by the sudden attack on persons, who, whatever their faults, had just been good to him. The judge took a note while he was pleading in arrest of judgment, but said nothing; and they were all four condemned to stand on the gallows for one hour with a rope round their necks, to be whipped on their bare backs with so many lashes *well laid on;* and then imprisoned for several years.

CHAPTER III.

Two little rivers meet and run to the sea, as naturally as if they had always meant to unite; yet, go to their sources in the hills, how wide apart! How unlikely to come together, or even approach each other! Why, one rises south, and the other north-east; and they do not even look the same way, at starting. It is hard to believe they are doomed to trickle hither and thither, meander and curve, and meet at last, to part no more.

And so it is with many human lives. The facts of this story compel me to trace, from their tiny sources, two human currents, that I think will bear out my simile. The James Annesley river is set flowing; so now for the Joanna Philippa Chester, and old England.

She was the orphan daughter of two very superior people, who died too young. Her mother was a Spaniard, her father an Englishman, and a lawyer of great promise. They had but this child. She inherited her mother's jewels and thirteen thousand pounds. Her father, tormented by some cruel experience in his own family, had an almost morbid fear lest she should be caught up by some fortune-hunter, and married for her money, she being a black-browed girl with no great promise of beauty at that time. During his last illness he thought much of this, and spoke of it very earnestly to the two gentlemen he had appointed her trustees. These two, Mr. Hanway and Mr. Thomas Chester, hated each other decently, but sincerely. Mr. Chester knew that, and, with a lawyer's shrewdness, counted a little on it, as well as on their attachment to

himself, to get his views carried out. He made them promise him, in writing, that Joanna's fortune should be concealed from her until she should be twenty-four, or some worthy person, unacquainted with her means, should offer her a marriage of affection; she was to be brought up soberly, taught to read and write very well, and cast accounts, and do plain stitching, but never to sit at a harpsichord, nor a sampler. She was to live with Mr. Hanway, at Colebrook, till she was seventeen, and then with Mr. Thomas Chester, her uncle, till her marriage. Each trustee, in turn, to receive a hundred pounds a year, for her board and instruction. Her fortune was all out at good mortgage, paying larger interest than is to be had on that security nowadays.

The one hundred pounds a year was of some importance to Mr. Hanway, and he was not at all sorry that Joanna Philippa was to be taught only what he and his housekeeper could teach her: that saved expense. He did teach her, an hour every day, and she was so quick that, at ten years old, she could read and write and sum better than a good many duchesses. But the rest of the day she was entirely neglected: so she was nearly always out of doors, acquiring more health and strength and freckles than a girl is entitled to, and playing pranks that ought to have been restrained. She was, at this time, a most daring girl, and she always played with the boys, and picked up their ways, and, by superior intelligence, became their leader. From them she learned to look down on her own sex; and the women, in return, called her a tomboy and a witch: indeed, there was something witch-like in her agility, her unbounded daring, and her great, keen, gray eyes, with thickish eyebrows, black as jet, that actually met, not on her brow, but — with a slight dip — on the bridge of her nose.

One summer afternoon, being then about eleven, she had just ridden one of Farmer Newton's horses into the water to drink, according to her custom, and driven the others in before her, when she became aware of a gentleman in black, with a pale but noble face, looking thoughtfully at her. It was the new vicar, a learned clerk from Oxenford. He smiled on her and said, "My young madam, may I speak with you?" He knew who she was.

"Ay, sir," says she; and, in a moment, from riding astride like a boy, she whipped one leg over and was seated like a woman, and brought the horse out, and slid off down his fat ribs, and lighted like a bird at the parson's feet, and took her hat off to him, instead of courtesying. "Here I be," said the imp. "My dear," says the vicar, "that is not a pastime for a young gentlewoman." Joanna hung her head.

"Not," said the parson, "that I would deprive you of amusement, at your age; that were cruel; but — have you no little horse of your own to ride?"

"Nay, not so much as a jenny ass. Daddy Hanway is — I know what he is, but I won't say till we are better acquainted."

"Come, come, we are to be better acquainted, then."

"Ay, an you will. Now may I go, sir?"

"Why, we have not half made acquaintance. Madam, I desire to show you my house."

"Alack! And I am dying to see it. So come on," and she caught him by the hand with a fiery little grasp.

"Have with you, then!" cried the parson, affecting excitement, and a proposed race to the vicarage: so they sped across the meadow. His reverence was careful to pound the earth and make a great fuss, but not to distress the imp, who, indeed, skimmed along like a swallow.

"There," said she, panting, "there's none can beat me

at running, in this parish, except that Dick Caulfield. Od rabbit him." The vicar allowed that refined expression to pass, for the present, and took her into his study.

"O Jiminy," she cried, "here's books! I ne'er thought there were so many in the world."

"What, are you fond of books?" said he, eagerly.

"I dote on 'em; especially voyages. I have read every book in our house, twice over; there's the Bible, and 'Culpepper's Herbal,' and 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and the 'Ready Reckoner,' and the 'Prayer Book,' and a volume of the 'Spectator,' and the 'Book of Receipts,' and the 'Book of Thieves.'"

"And which do you like the best of all those?"

"Why, the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' to be sure. 'Tis all travels."

"Strange," said the clergyman, half to himself, "that a girl born in a country village should be so fond of travels."

"Country village!" said she. "Drat the country village. I ran away from it once; but they caught me at Hounslow. But, bless your heart, I was only eight: better luck next time, parson."

"Nay, Mistress Joanna" —

"An't please you, call me Philippa. I like that name best."

"Well, then, Mistress Philippa, I am of your mind about travelling. My studies, and a narrow income somewhat drawn upon by poor relations, have kept me at home; but my mind hath travelled on the wings of books, as yours shall, Mistress Philippa, if you please. See, here's Purchas for you, and Dampier, Cowley, Sharpe, Woodes Rogers, where you shall find the cream of 'Robinson Crusoe,' 'Stout John Dunton,' and 'Montaigne's Travels,' short, but priceless. Here be 'Coryat's Crudities,' and 'Moryson's Itinerary,' two travellers of

the good old school, that footed Europe and told no lies. Ay, Philippa, often as I sat in my study, or meditated beneath the stars, have I longed to escape the narrow terms of this small island, and see the strange and beautiful world: first of all, the Holy Land, where still the vine, the olive-tree, and the cornfield grow side by side; where the Dead Sea rolls o'er those wicked cities, and Lot's wife, in salten pillar, still looks on; to see Rome, that immortal city where ancient and modern history meet and mingle in monuments of surpassing grandeur and beauty. Then would I run East again, and behold the mighty caves of Elephanta, monument of a race that is no more; the Pyramids of Egypt, and her temples approached by avenues of colossal sphinxes a mile long. Thence to the Pole, and see its spectral glories, great temples and palaces of prismatic ice, of which this new poet, Mr. Pope, singeth well, —

> 'As Atlas fixed, each hoary pile appears
> The gathered winter of a thousand years.'

Then away to sunny lands, where forever the sky is blue, and flowers spring spontaneous, and the earth poureth forth pines, and melons, and luscious fruits, without the hand of man, —

> '— and universal Pan,
> Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
> Leads on the eternal Spring.'

Then I would see the famous mountains of the world: Ararat, where the ark rested, as the waters of the flood abated; Teneriffe's peak, shaped like a sugar-loaf, and, by mariners, seen often in the clear, glassy sky, one hundred miles at sea; and above all, the mighty Andes, so high that no aspiring cloud may reach his bosom, and

his great eye looks out ever calm, from the empyrean, upon half the world."

The scholar would have gone on, dreaming aloud, an hour more; but his words, that to him were only words, were fire to the aspiring girl, and set her pale and panting. "O parson!" she cried; "for the love of God, take hat, and come along to all those placen;" and she crammed his hat into his hand and tugged at him amain.

"My young mistress," said he, gravely, "you do use that sacred name too lightly."

"Well, then, for the love of the Devil: I care not, so we do go this minute."

Then he held up his finger, and, with kind and soothing words, cooled this fiery creature down a little, and put "Dampier's Voyages" into her hand. Down she flung herself — for it was erect as a dart or flat as a pancake with this young gentlewoman; no half measures — and sucked the book like an egg.

He gave her the right to come and read when she pleased: and, from this beginning, by degrees, she became his pupil very willingly.

He played the viol da gamba himself; so he asked her, did she like music?

"No," said she, "I hate it." How many of her sex would say the same, if they did but dare!

Would she like to draw, and color?

"Ay. But not to keep me from my travels."

It turned out that she had an excellent gift at drawing, and a fine eye for color: so, with instruction, she soon got to draw from nature, and to color very prettily; the only objection was, in less than six months from the first lesson, every roadside barn-door within distance presented a caricature, in chalk, of the farmer who owned it, and often of his wife and family, into the bargain.

The number, and distance, of these "sculptures," as she was pleased to call them (why, I know not), revealed an active foot, a skilful hand, and a heart not to be daunted by moonlight.

The parson tried to break her spirit — with arithmetic. But no: she was all docility and goodness, by his side; she would learn arithmetic, or anything else, with a rapidity that nothing but a precocious girl ever equalled; but a daring demon, when he was not at her back.

In vain he begged her to consider that she was now thirteen years old, and must begin to play the gentlewoman; "I cannot," said she: "gentlewomen are such mincing apes. The boys they scorn them, and so do I; they make me sick. Parson," said she, "I love you;" and she made but one spring, and her arms were round his neck with the same movement. "Grant me a favor," said she, "because I love you. Have me made a boy."

The parson looked at her, gazing imploringly right into him with her great eyes; and was sore puzzled what she would be at now. However, the explanation followed in due course.

"Why," said she, "'twill not cost much, 'tis but the price of a coat and waistcoat and breeches, instead of these things," slapping her petticoats contemptuously; "and then I *am* a boy. Oh! 'twill be sweet to have my freedom, and not to be checked at every word because I am a she."

"Why, what stuff is this, child?" said his reverence: "putting thee in boy's clothes will not make thee a boy."

"Yes, it will. You know it will; nay, to be sure, there's my hair; but I can soon cut that."

"Now, Philippa," said her preceptor, "I cannot have you cutting your beautiful hair — which is a woman's crown — and talking nonsense. Hum! — the truth is —

ahem — when once one has been christened Joanna Philippa, in the church, one is a girl forever."

"Alas!" whined Philippa, "and is it so? Methought it was the clothes the old folks put us in that did our business." Then, going into a fury, "Oh! why did I not scratch their eyes out, when they came to christen me a girl? Why cried I not aloud, No! No! No! — A Boy! — A Boy!"

"Well, we must make the best of it, my dear. I will read you what Erasmus saith, in his 'Gunæco-Synedrion,' of the female estate, and its advantages. Then you will see that each condition of life hath its comforts and its drawbacks."

The compass of my tale does not permit me to deal largely in conversation; otherwise, the intercourse of this gentle scholar's mind, and this sharp girl's, was curious and interesting enough. It left Philippa, at fourteen years of age, very superior to the ladies of the period, in reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, walking, leaping, and running; but far more innocent, in spite of her wildness, than if she had consorted with the women of that day, whose tongues were too often foul.

At this time the good parson fell ill, and, having friends in office, obtained leave to go on the Continent.

He returned in two years, and found his pupil transformed into a tall, beautiful girl; even her black brows became her now, and dazzled the beholder. But such a change! She was now extremely shy; avoided the boys, blushed whenever they spoke to her, and played the prude even with her late preceptor. She had a great many new ideas in her head: need I say that love was one of them? But, as there was nobody in the parish that approached the being she had fixed on — young, beautiful, fair, brave, good, and that had made the grand tour — her favorite companion, after all, was the good

parson: only she now approached even him with a vast show of timidity. To tell the truth, she had just as much devil in her as ever; but, on the surface, was mighty guarded, demure, and bashful.

And now, seeing her to be beautiful, and knowing her to be rich, temptation entered the heart of Jonas Hanway. Jonas was a respectable man; but he was a father; and he thought to himself, "Now, if my boy Silas and she were to make a match on't, what great harm, so that it came about of itself, and not of my tempting Silas with her wealth? The Lord forbid I should ever do that."

So to bring this about as honestly as might be, the old man indulged miss with a pony and the very masculine riding-dress fashion permitted to women; also a little purple velvet cap and white feather, very neat: and set Silas to ride with her. She used to pace out of sight demurely, then dash out of the road into the fields, and away as the crow flies over hedge and ditch, depositing Silas in the latter now and then. She treated him altogether with queenly superiority; and as for him, he showed no admiration, notwithstanding the insidious praises of her old Hanway poured into his dullish ears.

One day, when Mr. Hanway was out, this young lady, who was now mighty curious, and always prying about the house, gave the old gentleman's desk a shake with both hands. She had often admired this desk; it was of enormous size and weight, and sculptured at the sides; an antique piece of furniture. When she shook it, something metallic seemed to ring at the bottom. She looked inside, and there was nothing but papers. "That is odd," thought Joanna Philippa. She shook it again. Same metallic sound. Then, with some difficulty, though she was a most sinewy girl, she turned it over, and saw a little button, scarcely perceptible. She pressed it, and

lo! a drawer flew out at quite another part of the desk. That drawer dazzled her; it was literally full of sparkling jewels, some of them very beautiful and valuable. She screamed with surprise; she screamed again with delight. She knew, in a moment, they were her mother's jewels, which Mr. Hanway had told her were a few trifling things, not to be shown her till her twenty-first birthday, and then she was to have them for her own.

"Oh! thou old knave!" said she. She did not hesitate one moment. "I'll have them, and keep them, too, if I hang for it; for they are mine." So she swept them all into her apron, and flew up-stairs with them, and hid them; then back again, and put the desk straight.

That night she had them all on, one after another, before she went to bed, and marched about the room like a peacock, surveying herself.

Next day she took fright, and carried them out of the house, and hid them in the thatch of an old cart-house that was never used nowadays, so not likely to be repaired.

On moonlight nights she would sometimes take a little hand-glass out, and wear the diamond cross and brooch, and parade with them sparkling in the moonlight. Her bedroom commanded a view of this sacred cart-shed, and she always took a look at it the last thing before she went to sleep.

When temptation gets the small end of the wedge in, how sure the rest is to follow.

In Jonas Hanway's case the wedge widened after this manner. The time drew near when he must hand his ward over to her uncle Chester, and the very day came, when Silas must go to London to enter a friendly merchant's house, under circumstances too favorable for the opportunity to be thrown away for nothing.

It was under this double pressure on Mr. Hanway's

conscience that the following dialogue took place between father and son upon the little lawn at the back of the house.

It was a fine spring day; the sun was shining hot after a shower. The gardener had been rolling the turf with a stone roller, and was now trimming the turf. Mr. Hanway had paced the gravel thoughtfully some time with his hands behind him, and Silas beside him, secretly longing to be out of the parish.

"And so, Silas," said the old man, regretfully, "in one hour you do leave your father and go to London."

"Ay, father," Silas replied, with the cruel cheerfulness of the young; "and I hope I sha'n't come back till I've made my fortune;" and then the old man stopped short and confronted him.

"Son Silas," said he, after a few moments' silence, "you might make it easier and quicker by staying at home."

"As how?" asked Silas, with an eagerness that showed he was not indifferent to suggestions of that sort. But Mr. Hanway, who had been so ready when he ought to have hesitated, began to hesitate now — because it was too late, I suppose. He said, —

"Nay, I ought not to tell thee that. It is very wrong of me. It is breaking faith with the dead."

Silas, who was a stolid youth in everything that did not touch his interest, replied very characteristically: "Why, you wouldn't keep your own son out of fortune to humor the dead! For shame, dad!"

Mr. Hanway shook his head, as much as to say he was not to be blinded by his hobbadehoy's egotism. He put the matter on a very different footing by a word.

"Nay, nay, 'tis thus," said he. "I see my son going to leave me, and a father's heart gives away. Boy, your cousin — my ward Joanna — she passes for a poor girl;

but she is not — the Lord forgive me for telling thee — she is an heiress."

"That tomboy an heiress! Sure you are jesting."

"No, Silas, no. Her father was afraid some fortune-hunter might snap her up, so he bound old Chester and me, that be her guardians — he did bind us solemnly not to tell a living soul. Alas! 'tis a wrong act I am doing; but 'twill all be in the family; and I hope he will forgive me, and not visit me of nights — whisper, Silas! She is worth thirteen thousand pounds the day she marries, and her mother's jewels, that are worth three thousand more; they came from Spain."

"Father," cried Silas, "you take my breath away." Then, with a doleful whine, "Why did you not tell me before?"

"For conscience's sake. I always hoped you two would pair by nature, being young and housed under one roof. And, Silas, bethink thee now, have I not given thee many a hint to woo her?"

Silas was fain to own this was so. "And," says he, "and so I have wooed the minx a bit, after a manner, now and then, to please you, not myself, I can tell ye."

"Good lad! good lad! Obedience to parents still brings a blessing."

Silas, an original observer, though on a very small scale, demurred to that wholesale judgment.

"It ha'ant brought me one then; on foot nor horseback neither. When I ride out with her to please you, she is ne'er content till she sees me in the mire; and the last time I walked with her I did but offer her a kiss, and she fetched me a slap — made mine ears to ring for half an hour and more."

"And what did ye then, son Silas?"

"Why, bade her go to the devil for a vixen and a tomboy, as she is."

Jonas thought this a sinful waste of opportunities. "Ye silly oaf," said he, "ye should have kissed her twenty times directly."

"What! and got twenty cuts on the head?"

Jonas shrugged his shoulders contemptuously at this reasoning. Silas, fancying he had got the best of the argument, added, solemnly, "You'd be content with *one.* She hits like a horse kicking."

"Why, faint heart never won fair lady," explained the senior.

"Fair! she is as black as a crow," observed the logical junior.

"Her feathers will make a peacock of thee, boy. Come, Silas, in one day she can make thee a gentleman for life."

"Why didn't ye tell me before?" whined Silas, driven into a corner.

He then represented that it was too late now. His place was taken by the coach, and that would come up to the George Inn, Colebrook, in an hour.

The pertinacious old man turned even this untoward circumstance his way.

"All the better, boy," said he. "Her heart will be softer at parting. Don now thy best clothes and woo her like a man. Tell her thou'dst give up London and fortune for her. And see! here's a ring of price. Clap thou it on her finger as thy betrothed. Maids do love rings dearly; ten to one she lets thee put it on; and if so, why with a buss 'tis settled."

Silas was wrought on. "I'll do't," he cried; "I'll do't; but mind, if she flings it in my face, I go straight off to London."

"Ay, but she won't; she won't." Then Silas hedged. "If she won't have the ring, you ought to let me keep it," said he.

"Ay, but she will; she will."

So Silas donned his best clothes, resolved to win Philippa, or else follow his valise to the coach. When he was dressed his father saw him, admired him, pronounced him inimitable, as far as mere personal attractions were concerned; but sore mistrusting his eloquence and tact in a matter of this kind, armed him with the very words he was to say, and so launched him at the unguarded Philippa, whom he had descried taking weeds out of the gravel with her little hoe. As for the old gentleman, he went to his own room and dressed for dinner; and that gave him an opportunity of peeping through the window at the courtship unobserved. The young couple had the lawn all to themselves; for whilst Jonas and his son were conversing, the gardener had taken an observation of the sun's altitude through his two hands, and had made it dinner-time or noon. Philippa's first notice of her suitor's approach was a loud sigh, rather theatrical than dramatic; she turned, and there was Silas in his best clothes.

"What, Silas," said she kindly, "are you really going?" and her heart smote her a little for her pranks.

"Ay," said Silas, affecting the deepest dejection (by paternal order), "I am going to leave thee and home."

"Oh! how I envy you," cried the candid Philippa. "To be a man, and carve your own way to fortune!"

"Ay, mistress," said Silas, a little off his guard, "'tis very inviting, and I have been wearying for the day. But now the time has come, it seems I know not my own mind, for fortune beckons me to London, but love holds me here."

"Love of what?" inquired Philippa, incredulously — "gudgeon fishing?"

"No."

"Love of lying about yawning six days in the week, and sitting and snoring in church the seventh?"

Silas received this summary of his pursuits with stolid patience.

"No," said he; "try again."

"Excuse me; I am better employed."

"Nay, then, I'll tell thee. 'Tis love of a beautiful girl."

"There's no such thing in the parish."

"Ay! but there is, with eyes in her head as black as sloes."

It was not worth Philippa's while to misunderstand him. After that, she blushed a very little, and then laughed.

"Oh, are you there, cousin?" said she. "If 'tis me you mean, waste not another minute, but go straightway to London."

"What, am I not good enough for you?"

"That," said Philippa, curtly enough, "is a question I care not to answer. Enough, you are not the man for me."

"And who is the man for you?"

"I'll tell you. He must be young — and brave — and good — and fair-haired — I'll never wed another crow like myself — and six feet high — and above all, one that hath made the grand tour, and will make it again with me; and then," said she, leaning on her hoe, and falling into a half reverie, "the fair lands we see together will be more beautiful to me by his discourse."

She looked so lovely with her beautiful eyes upturned in rapturous anticipation, that Silas began to warm to his work.

"If that is all," said he, "I am your man. We will travel the whole earth together, as soon as we have got the money. Philippa, look at this ring. Is't pretty, think

you?" Philippa glanced at it out of the tail of her eye, and said, "Indeed, 'tis well enough."

"Will you have it, Philippa?"

The lovely black eyes looked greedy, but feminine delicacy was on its guard; so a cautious answer was the result.

"Ay, if you like — some other time. When you are not talking nonsense."

"Nay, now or never, mistress," said Silas, armed with paternal resolution. "Come," said he, catching hold of her hand, "let me put it on thy finger, and give me a kiss for't."

Philippa drew back and began to pant a little at that. "I'll take no ring of thee in that way. Let me be, I say: I'd rather die than wed thee."

"And I'd rather die than not wed thee:" and he still pressed her hand, and threw his arm round her waist, and drew her to him by main force.

"Ah! let me go," she screamed. "You are a churl, and a ruffian; I'll not be used so."

She struggled violently, and when nothing else would do, she tore herself clear, with a fierce cry, all on fire with outraged modesty and repugnance, and gave him a savage blow on the bridge of the nose with her little hoe: it brought him to one knee; and, with that, she was gone like the wind, and flung herself, sobbing, into a garden seat, out of sight.

Now this severe blow was not dangerous, but it made the lover's nose bleed profusely. It bled a great deal as he kneeled, half stupefied, and when he got up a little way, it bled freely again: he thought it would never leave off. His love was cooled forever. All he cared about now was not spoiling his new clothes: so, after awhile, he walked away very slowly, with his nose projecting like a gander's; and he was scarcely clear of the

"OH, PRAY DON'T KILL ME!"

premises, when Joanna Philippa, who had peeped, and seen him off, came back to her occupation, looking as demure and innocent as any young lady you ever saw. She was rather dismayed though when she found the grass incarnadined, and the gardener's turf-cutter literally drenched with blood.

While she was contemplating this grim sight, and wishing she had not hit so hard, the old man came at her all of a sudden, white with rage. "Ay, look at your work, you monster," he cried, "and the poor boy leaving us for good. You have killed him, or nearly, and I'll trounce you for it." He griped her by the arm, and raised his cane over her head.

She was terrified, and cried for mercy. "O uncle, I did not mean — oh, pray don't kill me! don't kill me!"

He did not mean to kill her, nor even hurt her; but, in his paternal rage, he struck her a great many times about her petticoats, which made a great noise. She screamed all the time; only at first it was "don't kill me!" and then "don't degrade me!"

"There," said he, "let that teach thee not to be so ready with thy hands, thou barbarous, ungrateful jade!"

But now she confronted him, in silence, with a face as white as death, and eyes that glared, and her black brows that looked terrible by the contrast with her ashy cheek, a child no more, but a beautiful woman outraged. She said nothing, but gave him that one tremendous look, then fled, with a cry of shame and anguish. She flew to the cart-house, took out her jewels, and, in three minutes, she was gone. But nobody knew: for her cunning was equal to her resolution. She slipped into a wood that adjoined Mr. Hanway's premises, and going through that, got on the other side of a hedge, and so upon a road that led to London; but not by the great coach-road, else Silas must have seen her from the coach.

She entered the city at ten that evening, and slept at an inn.

Next morning she sold one of her rings, and took a modest lodging, and bought some stuffs, and set to work to make a suit such as she saw worn by tradesmen's daughters of the better sort. All her fear was, to be captured, and her mother's jewels taken from her. They were all her fortune, she thought; and, besides, she loved them.

One day, just before the new clothes were ready, and being weary of confinement, she strolled abroad, and seeing a chocolate house, whipped on her mask and entered it. While she was sipping her chocolate, a spark handed her the *Daily Post*, with a low bow, by way of preliminary to making her acquaintance. She thanked him so modestly, he hesitated; and let her read the paper in peace. It was a miserable sheet, with very little in it; but there was a curious advertisement: —

"April 26. Lost, or mislaid, one pair large brilliant earrings, with drops of the first water; one diamond cross; three large bars for the breast (diamonds of the first water); large pearl necklace; brooch of sapphire and brilliants; one large ruby ring; one emerald and brilliants; one locket, set with amethyst and rose diamonds. If offered to be sold, pawned, or valued, pray stop 'em (*sic*) and the PARTY, especially if a young lady; and give notice to Mr. Drummond, goldsmith, at Charing Cross, and you shall receive 200 guineas reward."

The paper almost fell from her hands, at first: yet, with the fine defensive cunning of her sex, she sipped her chocolate quite slowly, feeling very cold all the time; and then she went home.

The advertisement was very well worded for others; but falling, unluckily, into her hands, it disquieted as

well as terrified her. "My jewels!" said she: "not me. He means to steal them. Well, he shall never see them, nor me, again."

She carried her new dress to a shop that sold masquerade dresses, and she easily exchanged it for a seaman's holiday dress, a merchant captain's or mate's. She brought it home in a bundle. She purchased a trunk, and paid her landlady, and then she had only a crown left and her jewels.

She took a coach, it being now dark, and had the hardihood to change her clothes in the coach. The seafaring man's dress fitted her so loosely, she had no trouble. The moment she had got into it, her native courage revived, and she was ready to dance for joy. "Now find your young gentlewoman and her jewels," said she. "Nay, but I'll put the sea between us rather." She had noticed some clean-looking lodgings, so she made the coachman stop there. When he let her out, he started at the metamorphosis; but she put her finger to her lips and said, "Only a masquerading folly," and gave him her last shilling.

The landlady received the handsome young mate, all smiles, and they soon came to terms. In the morning she melted a jewel, and paid the landlady a week in advance. Then she took out her female costume and pawned it. She purchased shirts, and good stockings of wool and cotton; and marched about with a little hanger by her side, but was mighty civil, not feeling desirous to draw the said hanger. She always gave a fine gentleman the wall.

She now asked the prices of jewels at many places; and, hearing of a good ship bound for America, she sold a ring, called herself a merchant's son, dressed accordingly, and sailed, a passenger to Boston, in the Bay of Massachusetts.

Her first intention was to be a woman again, as soon as she got there. But there was what they called in those days "a spirit" on board the ship, that is to say, a gasconading agent, working for the planters; he told her such a tale about the American colonies, and how any man could dig a fortune there, that she agreed to indent as servant and book-keeper, and see whether it would suit her; she thought it was no use being idle in man's clothes; indeed, she had too much energy. She was easily led into signing an indenture, the full effect of which she did not comprehend; yet she was sharp enough to read the paper, and bargain that she was to do no work but keeping accounts and overlooking laborers, and this the agent wrote in, sooner than lose the prettiest young fellow he had ever seen; and, to make a long story short, a rich planter from Delaware acquired this prize, and carried her off to a first-rate farm near Willingtown.

There she remained a year, affording perfect satisfaction to her employer; reading every book she could lay hold of, taking in knowledge at every pore; flattering and so winning the women, and watching the men like a very cat, to know their minds. This study amused her greatly.

She left the seeds of trouble behind her. At seven o'clock that very evening she ran away, Mr. Hanway's gardener, whose cottage was on the premises, took in his turf-cutter, and showed it to his wife, all bloody. He laughed, and said, "Why, one would think they had been a pig-killing with this here."

His wife, instead of laughing, gave a scream, and then fell a-trembling. "Oh, dear!" said she, "we shall hear more of this." Then she told him she had heard some poor creature crying for mercy, and saying, "Oh! don't kill me! don't kill me!" and, after that, she had heard

heavy blows. "O John!" said she, "put it away from me, for I do feel sick at sight on't." So he went and put the turf-cutter away in the tool-house, just as it was. When he came back he asked her if she knew whose voice it was that had cried for mercy.

"How can I tell, all that way off?" said she. "'Twas a woman's voice, for certain; alack! ask me not, John, I'm afeard of my own thoughts."

"Well, keep them to thyself, then, we have got a good place. Least said is soonest mended."

Next morning the news was that Joanna had run away. The gardener told his wife at breakfast. She shook her head. "Run away, poor thing! She'll never run no more. She'll never be seen no more, without you do find her, digging about."

"Hush!" said the man. "Hold thy tongue; we have eaten his bread a many years."

"I shall never bear the sight of him again, I tell thee."

"Well, keep out of his sight, then; he won't come after thee, I trow; but if ye go hanging of him with your tongue, and losing me a good place, I shall twist thy neck, sweetheart, and then there will be a pair hung, instead of one."

These dark suspicions smouldered for many months. Mr. Hanway went to Mr. Chester, and told him the girl was a thief, and had run away with the jewels.

"A thief, Master Hanway?" said the other, coldly. "The jewels were her mother's, and coming to her."

"Ay, but she knew not that," said the old man, who was bitterly incensed against her. Not a word did he say to Thomas Chester about either of the violent scenes in the garden. Mr. Chester advised him to advertise, and drew the advertisement for him.

Months rolled on: all hopes of seeing Joanna again

oozed away: both trustees were unhappy about it, and on ill terms, for Hanway thought his allowance ought to go on; but Chester ridiculed the idea, and so it stopped, since money could only be drawn under both signatures.

Presently there arose in the village a vague, horrid whisper of "foul play." It reached Lawyer Chester. He tried to trace it; it was impalpable at first, like a sudden smell of carrion. But this keen lawyer tracked it, and tracked it, and discovered that an old blind man, walking in his garden, which adjoined Mr. Hanway's, had heard a voice cry, "O uncle! don't kill me! don't kill me!" and then several heavy blows. He learned, too, that the gardener's wife had lately thrown out mysterious hints, as to what would become of some people, if she were to tell all she knew. Then Mr. Chester began to fear a crime had been committed, only he could see no motive. But murders are not always motived; the passions slay, as well as the interests. Being a just man, and feeling that his dislike to Hanway might prejudice him, he carried his notes to a neighboring justice, and left the matter in his hands.

This magistrate was young and zealous; he had seen Joanna riding across country, and admired her; he went into the matter a little too much like a Crown solicitor.

Mr. Hanway was summoned to London, to attend his son Silas, who had caught a violent fever. The magistrate in question heard of his absence, and took that opportunity to call on the gardener. He found the wife alone, and by coaxing and threatening soon got her story out of her. He took possession of the turf-cutter, which tool she and the gardener had avoided with horror ever since; and the sight of it, added to the other evidence, gave him a shock, and convinced him he saw before him the proofs of a bloody murder.

Everything was therefore prepared for the arrest of

Mr. Hanway on his return. But that return was delayed by a truly pitiable cause. Silas was insensible when his father came, and died a few hours after. The desolate father had a shell made for the remains, and brought them down to Colebrook. The sad burden was but just taken into the hall, when the officers of justice, who had rigorous orders, arrested the bereaved father, on a charge of murder.

He stared at them stupidly, and said, "Are ye mad?"

They told him No, the evidence was strong.

"Is it so?" said he, languidly. "Well, let me bury my child, and I'll go to the gallows, or where you will; I have nought left to live for."

Then the officers of justice were puzzled what to do. However, as it happened, the magistrate himself came up; and, when he heard, he directed them to let the funeral proceed, but be careful the mourner did not escape.

The grave was already dug, and the clergyman waiting: so poor Silas was buried, attended by the whole parish, in strange silence, for their horror of the murderer was checked by their pity for the desolate father, to whom the charge of murder was, at that heavy hour, a feather-stroke, compared with his bereavement.

He went home alone: the officers kept a little aloof from him, and so did the people. He was examined in his own house, and confronted with the witnesses: the turf-cutter was also produced.

He told the simple truth: not a soul believed it: he was committed for trial, and a reward of fifty pounds offered to whoever should find the *corpus delictæ*, which was the one link in the evidence wanting.

Months passed on, and no *corpus delictæ*. At last some bones were found in a peat heath hard by, and brought to the justice, followed by a crowd.

"She is found! She is found!" was the cry. "The old rogue will be hanged now." And all day folk dropped in to see the bones of poor Joanna. The parson and Mr. Chester, who were good friends, went together. Says the parson, "I know these bones well"—

"There! there!" was the cry: "parson can swear to 'em, that is enow."

"—I know them," continued the parson, calmly, "for the bones of the moose deer, which ran in these parts four thousand years ago. I do bid against the Crown for these. I will give five shillings, and ten for the horns."

That very evening two young men came to the vicarage and told the maid, with a sheepish look, they had brought parson the gentlewoman's horns. They had dug a little farther.

But this did not shake the general impression that a foul murder had been done and artfully concealed. Mr. Chester, however, who had started the inquiry, now felt uneasy in his mind at what he had done: he called on Mr. Hanway, in prison, and found him piteously depressed. Mr. Hanway asked his forgiveness, if ever he had offended him.

"Nay, sir," said Chester, "I did never affect you much, nor you me; but, in truth, you never wronged me, that I know of; and seeing you in this plight, I blame myself, and would serve you. Come, courage, man. If she is alive, there is a way to find her."

"Would to God I knew that way!"

"Advertise for her. Let her know your trouble, and that she is an heiress. That will be against the letter of her father's wish; but not the spirit. Write the advertisement yourself, and I will see it sent abroad."

Then Hanway plucked up a little heart, and wrote a

humble, touching advertisement, describing his peril. Mr. Chester took it, and, having read it, was fain to wipe a tear from his eye, and straightway dropped the judicial character, and shut his eyes to the evidence, and, resuming old habits, retained himself solicitor for the defendant. In that self-assumed character, he spared not his own purse, but scattered the advertisements far and wide, not in England only, but Scotland, Ireland, and every foreign country that spoke the English tongue.

CHAPTER IV.

James Annesley remained in prison, awaiting his sentence. He was not without hope; but his fear was greater: and this fear soon rose to agony; for the unhappy pair, whose kindness had brought him to this, were led out to receive the first part of their sentence within sight of the grated windows of his cell. They had to sit under the gallows one hour, with a rope round their necks, and then received, the lover forty lashes, the woman thirty, and the servant twenty-one, all on their bare backs, and *well laid on.* Their groans and shrieks rent the air, and froze James Annesley to the bone, for he looked for his own turn to come next, and behind the cutting lash frowned the grim prison.

A week passed, and a spark of hope was reviving, when one morning the jailer and another officer came, and told him he must go with them. His knees failed him, he groaned, and lay back almost insensible. They gave him a drop of brandy, and, seeing his mistake, told him to pluck up courage. "You are to be exposed every market-day, and not to be whipped, till somebody in Chester shall prove you were in the town, before you came in a prisoner"

He was so exposed every market-day for a month: a large paper was pinned on his breast, inviting all good citizens to testify what they knew of him.

On the fourth market-day, casting his eyes wistfully round, who should he see but Drummond: he had come all that way to buy horses, and was so intent on business that he noticed nothing else. James made signs to him,

in vain; he called to him; he did everything to attract this cruel master's attention, whom he had run from. At last a man went for him to Drummond, and brought him up. Drummond started at first, then surveyed him with a cruel countenance. "What would you of me, young man?"

"Do but take me home, and I will serve you faithfully."

Drummond, to torment him, turned on his heel, without a word. However, he went to the justices and claimed him; showed, by an entry in his pocket-book, when he ran away, and from what place, and knocked the indictment to atoms. In twenty-four hours, James Annesley was riding home at Drummond's back. When he got him home, Drummond sued him for penalties and damages: the penalty, five days for every day's absence, came to a year; but the damages, being paid in service, came to two years and a half.

Upon this decision, James Annesley began to fret and pine away; and Drummond, who had lost one or two that way, sold him to Jedediah Surefoot, a flourishing planter, near Willingtown, in Delaware. This was a beautiful place, and had an extraordinary story, which was then fresh in men's minds. William Shipley, a Leicestershire man, was settled at Ridley, with his second wife, Elizabeth Levis, of Springfield, in the county Chester. She was a distinguished minister in the Society of "Friends," and a remarkable woman. Soon after her marriage, she dreamed a dream. She was riding through a wild country, on what errand she knew not; and mounted a lofty hill. From this hill burst on her eyes a landscape of surpassing beauty; a wide valley, green with sloping lawns, studded with clumps of trees, and settlers' cabins. The sun streamed golden through partial clearings made by the axe; even now it tinkled unseen: and broad rivers ran, and little brooks sparkled

silver, and meandered to the extreme limits of vision. She sat entranced upon her horse, and was speechless awhile with delight. Then she asked her guide what country this was.

"Elizabeth," said he, "it is thy home."

"Nay," said she, "my earthly home is Ridley."

"Not so," said he. "This sweet place cries out for thee, and for the Word. Submit thyself, then, to the will of Heaven, and come hither; so shalt thou do much good to the place and the people; and blessings shall be on thy house, and on thy labors in the Lord."

Elizabeth told this dream to her husband, with all the warmth and freshness in the world, and he made this sublime answer: "We are doing pretty well here," and the subject dropped.

Full three years afterwards, Elizabeth Shipley was invited to a meeting of Friends, between the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays.

She rode alone and without fear till she came to the Brandywine River, and then, though the water was low, she took a guide; he led her some distance to "the old ford," and she got through, and went up the hill, by "the King's Road." At the top of the hill she checked her horse, and uttered a cry of amazement and delight; for lo, there was the paradise of her dream before her, ay, down to the minutest feature of the landscape, and the axe that tinkled unseen. She sat like a statue on her horse, just as she had done in her dream.

After this, she constantly entreated William Shipley to ride with her and see the lovely place. He thought it a waste of time: did not believe in dreams, though he durst not say so. So, at last, she said to him, "William, settle all thou hast in Ridley on thy children by thy first wife; I and mine will stand or fall by the place the Lord doth call me to."

The prophetess knew her lord and master; he came with her directly to see Willingtown, and it struck him all of a heap. He examined it nearer, and found it was seated between the finger and thumb of two rivers, one impetuous and admirable for turning mills, the other tidal and navigable to the sea. "Why, Elizabeth," said he, "a man might grind his corn here with one hand, and ship it with t'other."

So, what with her faith in Power Divine and his in water power, the Shipleys settled at Willingtown, now called Wilmington, and gave that rising place a wonderful impulse. William Shipley bought land between the streams, and set up mill and factory. Elizabeth became a shining light, and drew the cream of the Quakers thither, and even poor James Annesley profited a little by her virtues; for she preached and practised humanity to slaves, and Dame Surefoot, a simple, motherly woman, was her pupil, though her senior; so there was no starving of slaves nor frolicsome flagellation on Surefoot's farm. Servitude was robbed of its fangs — though nothing could remove its sting — in the circle of which that pious woman was the centre.

But the beauty of the place and the milder servitude came too late for poor James Annesley. The long persecution of fortune, the almost unintermittent sufferings of his soul and body, had broken his spirit and clouded his youth. He was worn out, dejected, hopeless. His mind might be compared to a ship, which has been so tossed, baffled, and battered by storm upon storm, that at last it leaks, and sinks quietly in the golden ripple and placid sunlight of a calm.

He did his work well enough, but in dogged silence, and nothing ever came from him but sighs: his face was handsome, but full of misery. Dame Surefoot noticed this after a time, and asked him one day what was the

matter. "Nothing, madam," said he, "thank you." — "Then why so sad? Most servants are glad to come to us from Drummond."

"And so ought I to be, madam. I will try to be more cheerful. But three years more!" and he groaned.

"What is three years?" said Mrs. Surefoot. "Alas! young man, 'twill pass like a shadow. You have got this new trouble, the vapors, with keeping too much alone. I shall find you a companion, for you are a civil-spoken young man."

So that very evening she went to her favorite — when could any woman govern without one? — "Philip," said she, "prithee, speak to this servant James, and be good to him. He is well to look at and no idler, but so eaten up with sadness."

"Mayhap, he is in love," said Philip. "I'll soon find what ails him, mother."

This Philip was a black-eyed youth, as sharp as a needle, who kept all the accounts and sometimes rode on business. He flattered the mistress finely, and had got the length of her shoe, as the saying is. The master valued him on other grounds: he was saucy, but honest, and kept the books, though rather complicated, with marvellous precision and neatness. Thus valued on both sides, Philip, who by-the-by was older than he looked, gave himself considerable airs; and it was in rather a condescending tone he danced up to James Annesley, and invited him to leave off sighing, and walk with him into the town of Willingtown.

"Thank you, sir," said James, "but I prefer to meditate."

"To mope, you mean. 'Tis the worst thing for you; and I hate to walk alone. So be not churlish now. Why, man, we are countrymen."

"Sir, I shall be sorry company."

"But I shall be merry company. So come on."

"Well, if I must," said James, and went with him reluctantly.

Master Philip chattered away for both, and stole a glance at his companion now and then. Young Annesley's replies were civil, but reserved. "You are no mill-clack," said Philip, ironically. "I am not," said James, humbly.

Philip carried an enormous basket. He had to bring groceries home, and salt and medicinal herbs from Mrs. Dean, the Dutch widow, and coarse sugar, and a jar of vinegar. When all these were on board, the basket was very heavy, and James said, "I will carry that."

"Nay," said Philip, pretending to resist. "I carried it hither, and I will carry it home."

"That you shall not," said James, and laid hold of it, and fairly wrenched it from him.

"You are a rude bear," said Philip. "You have hurt my thumb."

"Where?" asked James, catching at it to see.

"Somewhere," said Philip, and whipped it behind his back.

"Well, I am sorry for that," replied James. "I am much older than you, and stronger, and the least I could do was to carry your burden, since you put up with my dull company."

"Speak not to me. I'll never speak to you again, bear."

"And what else am I good for now, but to carry burdens?"

"Oh, say not that, James. Alas! why are you so sad? You are young, you are well-looking — rather. What beautiful hair you have got! I declare I did never see such hair: 'tis like silk. I'd never despond, if I had such hair as that, instead of my black stuff. You should

flatter the women; that is the way to get forward. Look at me. I get my own way in everything, and that is my strategy. Tell me, James, I won't tell a soul — are you in love?"

"No."

"But have you been?"

"Never. I was but a boy when I was kidnapped and sent over here, and my heart has always been too heavy for those idle fancies."

"What, did you not come here of your good-will?"

"Consent to be a slave! who would be so base?"

James said this with a certain majesty that quelled his merry companion for a moment. He drew instinctively a little farther off, and walked with thoughtful, downcast eyes. Nor did he say much more, in fact, but brooded over what his companion had said. However, he chattered away fast enough to Mrs. Surefoot, and they agreed that James was not a sullen churl, but a fine, melancholy, interesting young man. Then they fell into speculations as to why he had been kidnapped and sent out. This wise conversation was uttered within hearing of Maria Surefoot, a demure, romantic girl of seventeen. She drank in every word, but said nothing; only, thenceforth, James became an object of vast curiosity and interest to her.

One day that some very heavy work in loading of timber was done near the house, James was very zealous and active; and so athletic, that Philip drew Mrs. Surefoot's attention to his prowess.

"Yes, in truth," said the worthy dame. "Here, Maria, run you and get him a can of wine, and take it to him; he has earned it right well."

Maria soon appeared with the can, and went to James; he was now seated on a bank, in sight, and, the brief stimulus of labor over, had fallen into his usual pensive state.

The girl approached him timidly and softly, and stood looking at him a considerable time. "Is she afraid to speak to him?" said Philip, pettishly.

"What should she be afraid of?" said Mrs. Surefoot.

The girl spoke to James, and he instantly rose, and removed his cap. She held him out the wine, blushing like a rose, and said, "Prithee, drink this; my mother sends it."

"I wish her every blessing," said James, piously; "and the same to you, Mistress Maria."

"You cannot wish me better than I wish you, James," murmured the girl, all in a flutter. "I have heard about you, and, if there is anything in the world I can do — for I pity you with all my heart." She turned, and went away in a tremor and confusion which did not escape the keen gray eyes of Master Philip. Dame Surefoot was older; so perhaps her eye could not seize all the minutiæ by which a girl's very body indicates when love has seized her.

The coast was no sooner clear than Philip ran out, and invited James into his office: "It is cooler there," said he.

As soon as ever he got James into his office, he said, sharply, "What did Mistress Maria say to you?"

"I could not say; I paid no attention."

"I like not that young gentlewoman: she is a forward minx."

"Is she? You know best. You have been here longest. How cool it is here; and you have flowers in your window. What a luxurious boy! And what a many books!"

"Yes, I am the only one that reads much here. So our dame lets me have all the library. Are you fond of learning?"

"I love it of all things. But, alas! I have been so ill

brought up, and, whenever I got to my books, some cruelty or other came and took me from them. It is my grief and my shame that I, a gentleman's son, have the education of a porter."

"What, then," said Philip, "tell me, if I were to teach you, would that make you happier, and to leave off sighing so?"

"Indeed, I think it would. I burn with desire of instruction."

"Well, then, I will give you a lesson every evening. Then you will be out of the way of all these forward minxes."

"I trouble not my head about them. I would liever be at the books with you. Let us begin at once."

Then Philip gave James a book to read, and he read it, but badly: gave him a letter to write, and he wrote it vilely.

"Come," said Philip, with a curious air of satisfaction, "I have a year's work before me, with thee."

He taught James every evening after work, with a patience and an untiring amiability, that he had not shown in conversation, and James ploughed at it with all his heart, and was pathetically docile and grateful. Out of this arose, by degrees, a tender friendship, and loyal partisanship, that belongs to youth: and so, one day, being now such friends, Philip urged him by their friendship to tell him his whole story. He hesitated. "Philip," said he, "I never told it yet, but some ill-luck did follow straight. No matter; sit by me, my one friend, and I'll tell it thee; ay, ever since I was four years old."

Then he told his story, but broke down once or twice; then went manfully on, the more so that while he was telling it, a brown but shapely hand stole into his, and was seldom idle, but ever speaking as variously as a

voice, with its gentle pressure of sympathy, and sudden grasps at danger: but when he came to his being kidnapped and swooning dead away in the ship, it trembled, and Philip turned his head away, and never looked towards him again, and by then he was flung into jail and cast for death, the narrator discovered that Philip was crying.

"O Philip!" said he, "do not you cry. Ah! how many a time I have cried over it all: but now my eyes are dry. Sweet Philip! how kind you are to cry for me. Ah, miserable me!" and, all of a sudden, Philip's tears drew forth his own once more, the first he had shed for years. They did him a world of good. "Oh, my dear Philip!" he cried, "you have saved me from despair: a cloud clears from my mind. Whilst I have one friend who will shed a tear for me, it were ungrateful to despair:" and he took Philip in his arms, and was going to kiss him heartily; but the boy panted, and put up both his hands, and said, "No, no! I am choking. Prithee, go get me a cup of wine."

James went accordingly, and the first person he saw was Mistress Maria; he asked her to oblige him with a cup of wine.

"Ay, that I will, James," said she, tenderly, and brought it him in a moment, and told him she must have the pleasure of seeing him drink.

"I will taste it, madam," said he; "but, indeed, 'tis for Philip. He is not well."

"For Philip!" said she, disdainfully. "I hope the next time 'twill be for yourself."

James ran with the cup to Philip. Philip was not to be found.

"Was ever such a boy?" said James. However, he left the cup of wine on the table: and the early negroes picked up that worm, as the saying is.

Next evening he went for his lesson, as usual. Philip was busy over a ledger, and only noticed him with a supercilious nod.

"Philip," said he, "I brought you the wine as fast as I could."

Philip never looked off his ledger. "You brought it so fast that I was gone to bed. You were too busy with Mistress Maria, to think of me, I trow."

"Nay, I did stay not two minutes with her."

"There — there — there — I thought as much; you *were* with her."

"Foolish boy; have I the key of the cellar? I asked the first I met."

"Well, I guessed she was the butler: so I did not drink a drop. Not a drop, sir."

"I am sorry for that."

"No, you are not."

"Yes, I am, Philip."

"Do not contradict *me*. I am very angry with you. You made me cry with your romance — that I do not believe a word of. Do not contradict *me*. And I am not so fond of crying as you are; it makes me ill: and so now I'll just give you a piece of advice, for I see everything from this window. My nose may be in my ledger, but my eye is on you all: so tremble! I tell thee young women are the artfullest creatures; they are not like men, who get gray and cunning. Girls are born artful, and two or three of these girls are setting their caps at you, after their manner. There's that Indian girl, Turquoise, she makes no disguise, being a savage; she lets all the world see she is ready to eat you up. Then there's the master's niece, great fat thing! she comes here six times for once she is wanted, and sits watching you with her great gray eyes, like a cat watches for a mouse. She will catch you too some day, if you

take not the better heed; and then there's Mistress Maria, that is the worst of them all, because she is always here, and has so many opportunities. She is ever throwing herself in your way."

"Nay, nay," said James.

"Do you not meet her in lonely places whenever you take your walks without me?"

"Sometimes; by pure chance."

"Chance! foolish man: that shows how little you are fit to cope with them."

"Very well, Philip," said James; "since you give me the benefit of your age and experience, I'll give *you* a piece of advice. Do not you trouble about me, for I am not in love with any young woman, and never was. What I love is the liberty I have lost, and the country I have been banished from. Love is not for a slave. If ever I get home again, I may fall in love; but I think it will be a dark woman: they have always been my best friends. So never you mind me. 'Tis you that are in danger from those girls, not I."

"Me? ha, ha!"

"Ay! why, your head is full of them. I never knew a boy of your age talk so much about women, nor think so much about them."

"Do I talk as if I love them?"

"No; but you do study them and abuse them beyond reason, and those are the men that are caught the first, I've heard."

"Well, this is idle chat. Come, sit down, and I'll give you your lesson, James. Now then. How dark is your sweetheart to be? Copper, like Turquoise; or lamp-black, like Chloe?"

"Thank you, Philip; I prefer a white skin. But her hair, and her eyebrows, and her eyes, I care not if they are as dark as"—

"The devil's," suggested Philip.

"Nay, yours will be dark enough for me. They are the blackest ever I saw — long life to 'em."

Philip colored high, with pleasure, and then said with arrogance, "Come, sir, this is idle chat. Let us to something more profitable, if you please."

The snubbed scholar submitted with a smile. He was getting used to Master Philip's caprices; they amused him.

James Annesley's spirits improved; his fine eyes began to beam at times, and color to come into his cheek.

Mistress Maria, on the contrary, began to sicken and pine; and the vigilant Philip determined to be her doctor, and prescribe her change of air. One morning he asked an interview with the master and mistress; they were breakfasting in the parlor. Philip was admitted.

Now Jedediah Surefoot was not like his wife, who treated her servants as her children; he was humane, but very short with them. Philip stood in awe of him, and had prepared a little speech beforehand. "Master," said he, "I think a good servant should tell his employer in time, if he sees anything going on that might take an ill turn: so I am come to tell you something."

"Then why not tell it at once?" said Jedediah.

"Nay, sir, only for fear you should be hasty, and blame him who is guiltless in the matter. The truth is, master, and I hope you will forgive me, and set it down to my zeal and duty, if I do make so free, but it is about my young mistress."

"Ay," said Jedediah, frowning, "and what canst thou have to say about her?"

"She is sick, sir; and will be while she bides here."

"Why, the air is wholesome enough. I never was better in my life than I am here."

"'Tis not the air that is amiss, sir, saving your presence. 'Tis the mind."

"Speak plainer, thou jackanapes, if thou hast aught to say at all."

"Nay, then; Mistress Maria hath cast her eyes on James Annesley, and 'tis for him she is lovesick. Would you cure her, 'tis but to send her elsewhere for a year. Change, and the sight of other men, will soon restore her."

Jedediah was taken all aback by this revelation. "Patience," said he, "can this be so?"

"Nay, Jedediah," said she, "I hope not; but Philip is not one that lies. Alas! what is to be done?"

"The first thing to be done is to know the truth."

He called a negro, and bade him clear the room, and bring an easy-chair into it. This done, he sent the negro to his daughter's room, and ordered her to come and sit in his arm-chair by the fire; when he heard her step on the stairs, he turned his wife and Philip out by another door (for the room had two), and left that door ajar. "Now bide you there," said he, "and still as mice."

He then went and ordered James Annesley to bring in billets of wood and fill the great basket in the parlor. This done, he stole back on tiptoe to his wife and Philip, and shook his fist at them, to keep their uneasy tongues quiet. They were on thorns, both of them, the mother for her daughter, and Philip for his friend. "Master," he whispered, "think what you do. James is a good young man. He will never be so unfaithful as to seek her out and offer love to her; but seeing her all alone, and sick for love of him, 'tis too much for flesh and blood. Why, 'tis like the devil to tempt a weak mortal so."

"Hold thy tongue, jackanapes," was the stern reply.

"Nay, but I cannot. This goes against my conscience. Do as you will, sir, but I wash my hands on't." And he was walking off with dignity.

A rude hand was laid on his collar, and Jedediah, in a stern whisper, said, "Wouldst go and tell thy friend James, and put him on his guard? Budge but one inch, and I'll have thee whipped, and soundly, the first this three years."

Then Philip turned very pale, and began to shake like a leaf. His quick spirit saw the terrible mistake he had made, and all the possible consequences flashed on him at once. What more likely than that James should commit a folly in an unguarded moment, and then the stern old man would punish him; and oh, agony! he would have been the traitor to betray his unfortunate friend; ay, and that friend would know it. Such was the distress this cost him, that beads of perspiration rose on his brow though his body was cold all over.

And the miserable suspense was so long; it seemed an age before they heard James come into the room and put down his heavy basket of wood; and then the time he was placing the billets in the large basket: and all passed in silence till the billets were placed.

At last a soft female voice said, "Thank you, James; you are very good."

"Nay, madam," James was heard to say, "'tis little to do for you, and you in sickness; but I hope you are better, Mistress Maria."

"No, James," sighed the young girl; "and never shall be till you are my doctor."

"I, madam!" said James; "why, I have no skill."

"'Tis not the skill, but the will, that lacketh. You dull, insensible man, see you not 'tis your unkindness that is killing me? Nay, dissemble no more. Oh! that I could hate thee as I ought, for slighting my affection.

Alas, James! what is it in me that displeases you? I am young; they say I am fair; am I not better worth thy love than that Indian girl, that is forever hanging about thee, and so I hate her. Speak to me, James, for mercy's sake; do not make me woo thee in vain, and sue where I have a right to command. Oh! how I shall hate you now, if you are ungrateful. Hate you? alas! I cannot; thou hast bewitched me. I love thee to distraction; for pity's sake, speak to me."

James was much troubled and abashed. "Madam," said he, "for heaven's sake bethink you; a slave is not a thing to love, nor to be loved. You are young, you are lovely; and I wonder that I can be so much your friend as to affront you. But you spoke of gratitude; do I owe none to your good mother, who has softened my slavery? What would her feelings be, and your father's, too, were I to be a traitor, and rob them of their only child? No, madam, I have not the excuse of passion; and I will not be a villain in cold blood."

"My parents! Hypocrite! You are a coward, and dare not love above you. Wretch, I hate the sight of you. Begone to your Indian!"

"Nay," said James, "I'll begone to my good Philip. He is my truest friend."

"Ah! and tell him how I have disgraced myself."

"Not me. And, madam, I will prove to you I was born a gentleman."

"Leave me, sir," said the girl more gently. He bowed and left her.

"James! James! James! Come back. You might say you do not hate me. You might tell me you are sorry for me."

"I am, madam. I pity you from my soul."

"Pity me? I scorn your pity. You must choose between love or hate."

"I will never love you, madam, if I can help it; and I will never hate you, after what you have said to me, till you give me cause."

So ended this strange interview. James retired, with a respectful bow; and the young lady, as soon as he was gone, had a cruel fit of sobbing.

Philip's face was now radiant with unhoped-for triumph, and poor Mrs. Surefoot's red with maternal shame, and the tears streaming. As for Jedediah, he looked terribly disturbed and gloomy. "Not one word of this to any soul that breathes; that is my order," said he. "If you disobey me, look to it."

Then Philip urged the temporary retirement of Mistress Maria. The good woman, who was like butter in Philip's hands, sided with him. Not so Jedediah. "Banish my daughter for a servant!" said he. "Think of some other way."

"May I?" said she. "Then, sweetheart, if I might have my will, I'd part them as becomes us. 'Twas rare fidelity and modesty. O Jedediah! I know what Mistress Shipley would say: Give the young man his liberty, that pines for it, and hath earned it of us by his good deed."

"Now you talk sense," said Jedediah; "I will think on't."

Then Mrs. Surefoot went all in a hurry, and told Mrs. Shipley her trouble, and Mrs. Shipley gave her religious comfort and advice, and highly approved Jedediah's giving James his liberty. "'Tis the least he can do," said she; "and a new suit to boot. If the young man is willing to try his fortune in these parts, I will give him an axe and a hoe, and a meal a day for three months, and William shall let him a few acres of wood for nothing the first year, and thereafter for a payment in kind. We have planted many a poor man so, that now doth well enow."

But whilst Mrs. Surefoot was in Wilmington, one McCarthy, a planter in the same district, and a thorough trader in all lawful articles, flesh and blood included, came in and found Jedediah strangely ruffled for one of his placid sect. McCarthy wanted to sell him some produce, but Jedediah answered fretfully, "Another day, friend. I am in sore trouble. The minx! the Jezebel! My peace is disturbed. My very stomach upset."

"Then do a bit of trading," said McCarthy, "that will comfort you; there is nothing like it. Now, what shall it be? Have you got any servants to sell, or sheep?"

"No," said Jedediah; then suddenly replied, "Hum! I've only one I can part with, and he's a pearl."

"A pearl! Don't try that on me, man. You ain't the man to part with the pearl first, and keep the oyster-shells."

"Family reasons, neighbor. 'Tis James Annesley. I cannot part with him for less than three hundred dollars. 'Twould be a sin."

"Three hundred dollars! O *Je*-rusalem!"

"Neighbor," said Jedediah, "prithee, in thy trading, make not so free with that sacred city, where is neither buying nor selling."

"Then I'll keep out of it as long as I can," said candid McCarthy. "I'll give one hundred and fifty dollars for him."

"I can't take that. 'Twere a sin."

McCarthy put on a look of alarm. "Oh, if you are going to talk religion, while you are doing business, you'll have the skin off my back." And he beat a feigned retreat.

Jedediah was alarmed. "Stay," said he, "thou man of haste — and Belial."

"Then take a fair offer, thou man of pious words and cruel, hard bargains."

The results may be divined. They came to terms for one hundred and seventy-five dollars; the money to be paid and the servant taken in one week. For Jedediah gave no credit, and McCarthy, though wealthy, had not the cash in his pocket, but was about to receive a large sum. This stroke of business did not transpire that day; but next morning Mrs. Surefoot carried it to Philip with a deluge of feeble regrets.

Philip was struck dumb by this sudden blow; for a long time he was too much surprised and shocked to comment on Jedediah's conduct and character; so Mrs. Surefoot babbled on uninterrupted. "What will Dame Shipley say? She will discourse on it till I shall wish I had ne'er been born. I am a miserable woman. The world is too hard for *me*. But, alas! I'm a wife, and sworn to obedience, and he is a good husband, and a good man; but what he hath bought for money, that he never will give for nought; the Lord forgive him, and me for not knowing how to manage him as Elizabeth does her good man, for all he is as hard as flint by nature."

Philip repaid her twaddle with a swift glance of scorn, then asked her, with affected composure, when McCarthy was to be expected. She told him in five days, without fail, and meantime Maria was to keep her chamber.

Soon after this Philip fell ill, and kept his bedroom. Mrs. Surefoot visited him often, and sent James to Katey Dean for simples. Philip got worse, and yet insisted on doing his work. At his request a couch was sent up to his little room, and he lay on his back and still kept the accounts, though groaning with pain. James became very anxious, and was always running up to see how he was, and sat gazing at his pale face piteously, and often implored him to say if there was anything he could do for him. Generally, Philip answered rather pettishly, and told James not to come there wasting his time. But

one day, seeing James gazing at him with the tear in his eye, and a look of wonderful affection and sorrow on his noble though simple face, the boy gave a great gulp, and whined out in rather a tearful way, "James, do not you be a fool. What is the man snivelling for?" James hid his face in both hands, and groaned aloud.

"Come near me," said the boy, "and I'll tell you a secret. Will you keep it faithfully?"

"Ay, that I will."

"Then you must know, I am not ill a bit; I am only feigning."

"What! Alas! thy poor white face."

"Chalk, stupid. I tell thee, when you are all abed, I rise, and dance about the place, and shake my fist at you all, especially at that old knave, Jedediah, and that dish of skim milk, his wife, that has got a man, and lets him be her master, instead of making him her head slave, as I would."

Philip's laugh and sparkling eye amazed James Annesley, and he cried out, "Oh, thou dear, good, sweet, wicked boy, for playing so with the hearts that love thee: let me kiss thee;" and he rushed at him to embrace him: but Philip caught up the inkstand in a moment, and threatened him; "Let me be," cried he, "I hate to be slobbered. Sit down, thou foolish, and talk sense."

"Nay," said James, "talk it thyself, and tell me why thou art such a dear, good, artful young fellow, to sport with the feelings of those that love thee; and, moreover, 'tis unlucky to feign sickness."

"Here's an ungrateful toad," said Philip; "why, 'tis for thee I do it."

"For me, Philip?"

"Ay, thou innocent, for thee. O James, I could not abear to be parted from thee." Philip said this with a world of tenderness, and then hid his face in his hands and blushed like a rose.

James's face showed that he was sore puzzled. Philip, who could change his mood like lightning, darted off into his favorite tone of lofty assumption. "Why, thou coxcomb," said he, "dost thou really think thou art fit to go to a new master, without me at thy back? Come, James," added he, patronizingly, "you are a good, worthy young man, but you know you are somewhat of a milksop. You are not fit to go alone. You cannot beat the men, nor flatter the women. I can do both, especially make fools of the women, and turn 'em to butter with my tongue; and I know not how it is," continued he, assuming now an air of philosophical meditation, "but custom governs us strangely; once get into the habit of taking care of a child, or a dog, or a James Annesley, or any foolish, helpless sort of a pet, and in truth, you get so used to it, you can't let it go alone; you still come clucking after it, like a hen after her duckling. Is it not laughable?"

"No; for I am as fond of thee, Philip, as thou art of me."

"That you may easily be: for I am not fond of you at all: but I am warmly, and sincerely, and truly, accustomed to you, sir: and so I can't part, I won't neither; I'll kill everybody dead first, and die myself. But there's no need of that; I've got the key to that hunks: Avarice, James, avarice! Come, no more idle talk; but be a good lad: obey thy friend and protector, and let's to work. Give me that piece of chalk. So. Now go you to Jedediah, and ask him to see me alone, before I die. Tell him I have somewhat to say I would not trust even to our dame."

James did as he was bid; and Jedediah, in the course of a few hours, when he had nothing more remunerative to do, went to Philip's room. He found him lying pale and exhausted, with a little table by him.

He sat down by him, and said he hoped that he was better.

"Master," said the boy, "I shall never be better. I have got the complaint my father died of, and in a few days I shall leave you. What vexes me is, you will lose a faithful servant."

"'Tis a sore dispensation to *me*."

"And you will have to bury me; and that is like flinging money away. Nothing comes of it."

"It cannot be helped," said Jedediah, with a little groan.

"Not by you; but I think I could help it. Why should you lose the money you paid for me, and the money for the coffin and all?"

"'Tis a sore dispensation. But it cannot be helped."

"Yes, sir, it can. McCarthy comes here to-morrow, to buy slaves." Jedediah nodded. "He got the better of you in that sale of wood."

Jedediah groaned.

"It's your turn now. I'll seem well, or nearly, when he comes: you shall say, 'James Annesley will fret, without his friend:' then McCarthy will buy us both: and I shall die on his premises, not yours."

Jedediah's little keen eye flashed. He subdued it, and said, "But I doubt me whether that would be fair trade. What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to spoil the Egyptians?"

"It is a Christian duty. And think of me, master. I shall die miserable, if you have to bury me, and lose so much *money* by me."

"Nay, I will not have thee die unhappy. That were cruel. Thou hast been indeed a faithful servant, and I'll humor thee in this thing."

"Good master, kind master! Then I pray you go at once to Mistress Maria's chamber, and fetch me her pot

of red. Ask her not for it, or she'll deny you, and swear to't. 'Tis in the drawer of her table whereon stands her glass."

"My daughter, paint her face?"

"Ay, and her lips and all, at odd times. Fetch it me, sir, privately; for without it McCarthy will see the trick, and never buy me."

Jedediah went straight for the cosmetic, looking black as thunder.

Philip chuckled with delight. "Aha!" said this sweet, harmless boy. "I have lent that minx a dig into the bargain."

McCarthy came with money in both pockets, and was taken into Philip's office. Philip wrote him a receipt.

McCarthy eyed the penmanship, and the books. "Sell me this one," said he to Jedediah, more than half in jest.

"You may as well, master," said Philip, "for you know how fond I am of James. I sha'n't stay anywhere long without him."

"Do not balk his fancy," suggested McCarthy. "I'll give ye fifty dollars more for this one."

Jedediah, after a well-feigned hesitation, consented, and in less than an hour the two friends' bundles were in McCarthy's light wagon, and they were marching behind it.

With them, to their infinite surprise, walked Jedediah Surefoot, a short, thick riding-whip in his hand.

The fact is, his daughter had slipped out, taking advantage of her mother being at Willingtown, and he was afraid she had resolved to have a tender parting with James, or some worse folly: and, who knows, exasperated at being sold instead of rewarded, James's good faith might melt before a second temptation of the sort. So he said grimly, to his late servants, "I'll set ye on your way." He stalked along with them in silence. They

thought he would go a mile, and then give them his blessing; but no: mile after mile, this kill-joy stuck to them, and was irksome, for they both wanted to talk and congratulate each other on being still together.

At last Philip lost all patience, and resolved to make the intruder smart; he whispered James to fall back a little, and suddenly putting on his saucy swagger, that was quite new to Jedediah, he said, "Come, old man, hand forth my vail."

"Thy vail, boy?"

"Ay. Do you think I shall let you bite my worthy master there, and not have my nibble? Two gold pieces I demand. Give them, or I'll reveal the bubble to McCarthy, and have thee trounced, thou dealer in man's flesh; thou hypocritical knave, that would'st rob a church, and go to prayers before the deed, and after."

Jedediah was stupefied at first, by this sudden hail-storm of insolence; but amazement soon gave way to rage. He gave a roar and rushed at Philip. Philip screamed and tried to escape, but could not; he clutched him fiercely by the collar, and raised his whip on high; but it never came down; for, at Philip's first scream, James rushed on Jedediah with equal fury, and seized his arm, and caught him by the throat so felly, that, in a moment, his face was purple. Then James seized his whip, and, mad with rage himself, whirled him round in a circle, and thrashed him furiously; then put his foot to Jedediah's stomach, and, with one amazing thrust, spurned him head forward to the ground, that he rolled over, and the dust rose round his helpless body, like a cloud. This done, he flung his whip at him where he lay.

Philip clung, sobbing and trembling, to his arm.

James stood like a Colossus, his feet wide apart, his eyes glaring.

"Nay, be not alarmed, sweet Philip," said he. "He is no master of ours, but only a knave I have taught a lesson. None shall lay whip on thee, while I am by."

He coaxed and encouraged him, and they walked slowly on; but Philip, in walking, still clung to James's strong arm, and trembled.

When he was a little better, he looked up, and gazed on James, with quite a new sentiment of admiration, and said, "Oh! how grand, and strong, and brave, and beautiful you were. I did not think 'twas in you."

Having thus delivered himself, he lowered his head again suddenly, and clung to James's arm again.

"Nay," said James, "I am not a brave man: my want of courage was the first cause of all my misery. Child, 'twas only rage, not courage; no matter; I have but one friend; I'll not see him abused."

"Bless you, James!" He suddenly took James's hand, and kissed it with a gentle devotion he had never exhibited before. "Dear James," he said, "I cannot bear a blow. 'Twas for a blow I left my home, and all my friends."

"Ay, indeed! Pluck up heart now, and tell me all about that."

"Tell thee my story? not for all the world."

"Why, I told thee mine."

"Ay; you have nought to blush for. I'd rather die, than tell thee mine. What have I done? I have put a barrier between me and the man I — nay, heed not what I say. I am ill. I am sick. I have been frightened. I shall faint. I shall die."

"Nay, nay," said James, "take not on so, for nought. Is this he who called me a milksop?"

"Ay," said Philip, weeping. Then with a piteous effort at his little hectoring way, "and will again, if I pee-pee-please."

"Meantime," said James, "I'll bestow thy valor in yon cart;" caught up the weeping Hector in a moment, and carried him in his strong arms, striding away, till he overtook the cart. "Master, poor Philip hath been ill of late, and he is aweary. May I put him in the cart?"

"And welcome. There is room for thee an' all."

"Nay, sir, I will not weight the good horse."

In a very few minutes there was a good deal of talking and laughing in the covered cart. Master Philip was amusing his new master, and taking the length of his foot.

"Dear heart!" thought Annesley, "what a strange boy 'tis. He changes like the wind."

Late at night they reached McCarthy's, a large fa[illegible] about sixty miles from Philadelphia.

CHAPTER V.

McCarthy was a widower, and the house was kept by his daughter, a lady of very striking appearance. She was very tall and commanding, and fair. Some thought her beautiful; others were repelled by the extreme haughtiness of her features, with which her deportment and manners corresponded.

The two friends, of course, talked everybody over, with whom they were likely to come in contact; and they differed about Mistress Christina McCarthy. James thought her the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Philip screamed, "What! ! ! ! ! ! a nose like a man's, foxy eyebrows, white eyelashes, and a cold, cruel eye. She is not a woman," said this candid critic; "she is a cat."

"I never heard thee praise a woman yet," objected James.

"That is their fault, not mine," retorted Philip, who had long ago resumed the upper hand. "You will be pleased to avoid that cat like poison," said Philip; "and, if she runs after you — and I hear she has had a dozen beaux already — you will come to me for advice, or our friendship is at an end, sir. I shall have my eye on her."

The effect of Philip's espionage was this: he discovered that Christina McCarthy passed James and him as if they were dirt, her lofty affections being fixed on a big mulatto slave. Such an attachment was repugnant to the feelings of white men, and contrary to law. They kept it very close, in consequence, and nobody on the

farm dreamed of such a thing, until this Argus-eyed Philip came, and found it out, by their secret glances, and signals, and a deal of subtle evidence.

He told James of it, and made merry over the lady's hauteur.

"That is so like the jades; whenever one of them knows herself baser than all the rest, she puts on a mask of transcendent pride, to throw dust in folks' eyes. But they cannot throw dust in mine."

James hoped it was not true; "for 'tis disgraceful," said he, "and contrary to nature; and, poor man, she is his only child."

"Don't contradict me," said Philip. "I tell you 'tis so; and I'll show you the law." He had picked out a copy of the State laws, on purpose to ascertain the probable fate of this haughty beauty, whose superb carriage had roused a most vindictive feeling in Master Philip.

James was not so curious in love affairs as Philip, and saw nothing to justify the libel. The lady passed often before his eyes, a model of cold dignity and feminine reserve. He scouted the notion, and almost scolded Philip for his uncharitableness towards women.

But one evening, having done his work, he took "Plutarch's Lives," which Philip had borrowed for him from the master, and lay down under the stockade, to read it. He was so absorbed in this book, and lay so still, that the little birds came about him, and did not mind him; the dusk came on, and still, with his young eyes, he went on reading, till suddenly he heard footsteps on the other side of the rails, and, after the footsteps, voices.

Now James was outside the rails, but these speakers were inside, and well hidden by the shadow of some lofty trees. This, in fact, was the favorite rendezvous of Christina and the mulatto Regulus. James knew the young lady's voice directly, and, though they spoke low

and hurriedly, he heard enough to show him they were lovers, and that she was going to elope with the fellow, as soon as she could lay her hands on a large sum of money her father was about to receive for the sale of another plantation. James listened with horror, and asked himself what on earth he should do. At last these ill-assorted lovers parted; that is to say, Regulus went off, leaving his young mistress to follow at such an interval of time as might lead to no suspicion. Then James thought he would not tell the old man, but would at all events try first to show the young woman her folly; he ran hastily to a gate, penetrated the wood, and came swiftly through the trees to her, for he saw her white dress still standing there. Seeing him come straight to her so fast, she took him for Regulus come back with news, and she was so unguarded as to say, "Why, what now, my dear Regulus?"

A strange voice answered her, at whose first tone she uttered a faint cry of alarm. "'Tis not Regulus, madam, but one who has more real good wishes towards you than he has."

Christina trembled violently, but defended herself. She drew up haughtily, and said, "Why, 'tis James Annesley. How dare you speak to me? What are you doing here at this time? Have you been here long?"

"Long enough to learn something that astonishes and pains me, and I hope I may be in time to prevent it. Madam, I saw you and Regulus together."

"Wonderful! And now you see me and another of my slaves together. I was giving Regulus an order, and now I give you an order. Go home, and sleep the liquor off that hath made thee so bold as to speak to me; begone, or dread the whip, thou malapert!"

James stood his ground. "Before I go, tell me what

I ought to do. I am your father's servant, madam, not yours. Both you and I, we eat his bread. Ought I to let him be robbed of his daughter, and his money, and never breathe a word?"

Then she began to pant, and said, "What mean you?" Then he told her that he had overheard every word that had passed between her and Regulus.

"Indeed!" said she, with an attempt at defiance, belied by her short breath. "Repeat it, then," said she, ironically.

"I will," said he, gravely; and he did repeat it, and at such length, and with such exact fidelity, that, as he went on, shame and infinite terror crawled over her; her knees smote each other, and her haughty frame cringed and writhed, and she sank half down upon a woodpile that was near, and her white hands fell helpless, one in front of her, and the other by her side: never was a proud creature so stricken down in a moment.

Then this good young man pitied her, and hoped to save her. He said, "Madam, for heaven's sake, look at the consequences. What good can come of it? If you fly with Regulus, and take your father's money, you will be caught one day, and set on the gallows, and be publicly whipped: for I have seen one as young and fair as you served so."

A moan from the crushed woman was the only comment.

"And if you steal nought, yet marry a mulatto, 'tis against the law, and your children will be illegitimate, and you will lose your father's estate, and break his heart."

Christina interrupted him. "Oh, say no more, James, for pity's sake. I have been mad. Oh! what a precipice! James, do not thrust me over. Do not tell my father, for mercy's sake."

"Not if you will promise to forego this mad design. Sure that mulatto must have bewitched you. That one so fair as you should cast an eye of love on anything so foul."

She caught at this directly. "Ay," she cried, "'twas witchcraft, and no other thing. But you have opened my eyes, good James — too late — too late!" and she burst into a flood of tears.

"That depends on yourself: if you will swear to hold no more converse with that mulatto, I shall not feel bound to utter one word of what I know."

"James," said the lady, "you are my guardian angel; you have saved me from a crime, and from an act of frenzy I now look back upon with horror. Do but continue your good work. Advise me at every step, and all will be well."

James was surprised into consenting to that, and she then begged him to conduct her home. "Alas!" said she, "I can scarce stand." She leaned on James's shoulder, and went very slowly and feebly. This gave her time to say some of those vague things with which such women think to excuse their follies. "If you knew all, you would pity me, even more than you condemn me." And again, with her white hand leaning on his arm, she said, "How sorcery blinds us!" And what with this, and her gentle pressure of his hand at parting, she disturbed even this Joseph's mind a little, and set him thinking it would not be very hard to cure her of her insane caprice.

Next day she sent for him openly, and told him her plan. "I shall keep out of his way; I shall not move from my own apartments; or, if I do, you shall be with me; and now here is a letter I will beg you to take him. Read it first before I seal it." The letter ran thus: —

An accident has frustrated our design, for the present. My father has not yet brought the money into the house. I hurt my foot last night, and shall not, I fear, be able to come to our rendezvous for some days. Burn this before the face of whatever person I may send it by, or I shall think you do not mean fair to

THE WRITER.

James highly disapproved this letter, and told her so. "Why," said he, "it cannot fail to keep hope alive in him."

"Exactly," said she, "and so he will not blab of my folly."

"No more he will, if you break off all connection with him. And why write at all? Such a letter is worse than silence."

However, she talked him over, and convinced him that she was resolved, in a cowardly and artful way, to detach herself gradually from the deplorable connection, so that he half consented to take the letter. Then she took a slice of cake out of her closet, and a pint of rich wine, and sat close to him while he drank it, and showed him such signs of favor, that he was the more inclined to believe she would readily detach herself from Regulus; so he consented to take the letter.

The mulatto eyed him keenly, took the letter, read it, burned it before his eyes, and said, "Tell her what you have seen me do: that is all."

Christina now showed James so many marks of favor, and so open, that Philip took him to task. "My poor mouse," said he, scornfully, "are you going to let that cat catch you so easily?" When that produced no effect, he remonstrated, advised, scolded, and, at last, quarrelled with him downright, and would not speak to him.

Now James was really rather smitten with Christina:

her tenderness and cajoleries, following upon her haughty demeanor, had wonderfully tickled his vanity, and even grazed his heart; but he was not so far gone as to part with Philip's friendship. So one day he came to him, and said, "Dear Philip, do not you quarrel with me, in a mistake. I will tell thee the truth about Mistress Christina; but first you must swear to me, on the big Bible, never to reveal one word of that I tell thee."

Philip turned pale at this, but took the oath, and then James told him all.

He was more alarmed than surprised. "I knew she was naught, the minute I clapped eyes on her. Look at her white lashes, and her cold, cruel eye. The unnatural beast! that would rob her own father, and wed with a brown! And what sort of a man are you? Why went you not straight to her father, like an honest man? What had you to do to go to her, and get cozened, you silly goose? Are you a match for that artful jade, think you?"

"Nay, she seems very penitent, and keeps away from him; and — whisper, Philip. If I chose, I could take the brown's place, as you call him, any day; and, really, 'tis a temptation."

"You love the wretch?"

"Nay, not quite love; but she is fair, and she was so haughty, and now is so tender. I own I think more about her than I ever did of any woman yet. To be sure, I am very proud of saving her, and that makes the heart soft towards the fair creature I have rescued from 'a precipice.'"

Philip's face turned green, and his lips pale. His face was distorted and discolored with the anguish these words cost him; and he sat mute as a statue.

James did not happen to look at him, and went maun-

dering on. "The only thing I like not is that letter to Regulus. What think you of it, Philip?"

Philip, though sick at heart, made a great effort, and said, faintly, "The letter was writ to show him he must temporize, but not despair. Prithee, James, leave me awhile: I have work to do. Come in an hour, and we will see what all this really means."

He went, and then Philip began to sigh and moan at the confession James had made; and, for a long while, he could think only of his own misery at being supplanted in James's heart. But of course his hatred of this rival soon led him into a keen and hostile examination of her conduct, and the consequence was a new and more disinterested anxiety, which led him to put a very keen question to James the moment he entered the room. "Has the mulatto shown you any enmity?"

"None whatever."

"Yet he sees his mistress bestow favors on you. Then all is clear. She has told him. You are their dupe. How that woman must hate you!"

"Nay," said James, smiling conceitedly, "that I'll be sworn she does not."

"What, not when you have come between her and her fancy, and do keep them apart? Think you, when once a woman hath loved a woolly mulatto, she can so come back to wholesome affections? She hates you, and spends her days and nights scheming to destroy you. Oh, those cunning lashes, and that cruel eye! They make me tremble for you. Let me think what she is about at this very minute." He resumed, after a pause, "She will draw you on to offer her some innocent freedom, then fly out, and accuse you of wooing her. Who will believe you, a slave, when the young mistress swears?"

"I'll not give her the occasion."

"How can you tell? And if you do not, why then she will get rid of you some other way. You shall be stabbed in the back, some dark night, and never know who struck you; but I shall know, and I shall kill *her*, — before I die."

So strong were Philip's fears, that he armed James with an enormous knife, and made him promise never to go to any lonely place without it. James assented, to quiet him, but, in his heart, made light of these extravagant fears. On the other hand, he felt piqued by Philip's insinuation that the mulatto and his penitent were duping him; so he used often to get up in the dead of the night, and make his rounds with stealthy foot, to watch. The effect of this vigilance was, that one moonlight night, coming softly round a corner, he found Regulus under the young mistress's bedroom window, which window was open, the weather being warm. James collared him directly. "What do you do here, at this time of night?"

"I do what you do," said the mulatto.

"Not so," said James, "for I guard my master's goods against a knave."

"Knave thyself, and meddler, and fool!" cried the mulatto, whose rage had been simmering this many a day.

From words they came to blows, and struck each other hard and fast, without much parrying, in the midst of which Christina put her head out of her window on the first floor, and looked steadily down at them. After a few moments of self-possessed observation, she said, in a keen whisper, "Kill him!"

In this combat the white struck at the face, and the black at the body; by this means the black's face was soon covered with blood, but the white man was most hurt, and felt instinctively that he should soon be over-

powered; so he closed with his dark antagonist: they wrestled fiercely, but it ended in James throwing him, and falling on him. The ground was hard, and the fall of the two heavy bodies on it tremendous; it drove the wind out of Regulus for a moment, and James got him by the ears, and pounded his bullet head on the ground.

Christina now screamed loudly: a window or two were opened; night-capped heads popped out, and the combatants separated by mutual consent, and retired, glaring at each other.

James had not gone far when he was seized with a violent sickness, and, after that, he crawled to his bed, bruised and seriously hurt by the body blows he had received. Next morning he was too stiff and ill to go to his work.

Philip heard a vague report that James and the mulatto had been fighting in the dead of night, and sent a message directly to James, desiring to speak to him. The servant came back and said he was too ill to leave his bed. Philip was much concerned at this, and, after a slight hesitation, went and knocked at the door of James's room: he slept over the stables. A faint voice said, "Come in." Philip lifted the latch. He found James lying on the bed, just as he had come from the battle, and his face two or three colors. Philip had intended to scold him, but this was no time. He came softly to him, and said, "Alas! my poor James, how is it with thee?"

"But badly, in truth," said James, still in a faint voice.

"How came it about?"

He told him the truth.

"Ah!" said Philip, sadly. "Jealousy. How men do love ill women! That old cat — thirty, if she is a day — to have two lovers, and two nations after a manner,

fighting for her o' nights beneath her very window. Did she see you?"

"Indeed she did."

"And smiled, I'll be bound, at what would make a good woman scream to part the fools. Did she say nought?"

"She said, 'Kill him!'"

"Kill whom?"

"The black, I do suppose."

"I am not so sure of that." And Philip fell into a reverie. It was broken by James going suddenly back on something Philip had said. "I do believe thou art right," said he, "and finding him under her window, I felt a sort of jealousy as well as wrath at his continuing to tempt her: if 'twas so, I am rightly served: but flout me not for't, Philip, for I think I am sped."

"Now, Heaven forbid! Where is thy hurt?"

"All over me. I made a great mistake. I kept beating him about his bullet head; but he still belabored my ribs. Oh! I am all pains and aches; it hurts me e'en to speak."

"Alas! alas!" said Philip, and laid a cool, consoling hand on the hot brow: then he suddenly ground his set teeth, and said, "Curses on them all: I will end this to-night; no later."

James asked him what he meant. He refused to say; but the fact is that he was resolved to go that very night to McCarthy, who was then on a visit to his brother, five miles off, and tell him the whole story. Knowing that James would remonstrate, he kept his resolution to himself, and went off for the present to prepare a composing draught for his patient, after the receipt of Patience Surefoot. He made the decoction, in which, I believe, dried flowers of the lime-tree were a principal ingredient; and while he was thus employed, a negro came in,

and, with a congratulatory grin, told him there was a gentlewoman wanted to see him. He came out, and beheld Maria Surefoot on horseback. He stared at her. "Philip," said she, "I have ridden fifteen miles to bring thee this." She handed him a copy of the *Philadelphia Post.* "Sweet Philip, tell him I loved not wisely, but truly." Then she looked all round for James; but she knew it was better for her not to see him: the tears started from her eyes; but she turned her horse's head, and away home without a word, little knowing that she had honored her sex, and adorned God's creation, by that simple act.

Philip took the paper back to his room, and sat down to see why she had brought it all that way. Maria had marked an advertisement.

"His Majesty's frigate Bellona, commanded by Admiral Vernon, is now lying in Delaware Bay, short of hands, whereby idle seamen and apprentices can now obtain double pay and good victuals."

Philip saw at once the value of this hint, and did justice to Maria's unselfish love, which disappointment had purified, instead of turning it to hate, as it does your selfish passions. But having James by his side, he was hardly prepared to run the risk of flight. James had already suffered cruelly by an attempt of that kind. Yet it was a great temptation: he vacillated. He held the paper in his hand, and pondered the pros and cons.

And now I have a truly extraordinary circumstance to relate: the paper, a single sheet, contained only twenty advertisements altogether; one was, as I have related, marked for Philip to read. But there was another one not marked, and Philip's eye fell on it by accident. Yet this advertisement set Philip's eyes staring, and soon as he read it, the paper began to shake in his trembling hands.

"I, Jonas Hanway, now lying in jail, charged with the murder of my ward, Joanna Philippa Chester, take this way to let her know my evil plight, and beg her, for pity's sake, to come back, or write of her welfare. Poor Silas, that made the mischief, is in his grave, and nought awaits her here but my true repentance, and the kind affection of my co-trustee, Mr. Thomas Chester, under whose care she now is, if only she could be found. And, for a further inducement to return, I do now, with my co-trustee's consent, inform her that she is heiress to a fortune of thirteen thousand pounds or more, which knowledge was withheld from her by her father's express desire, lest any man should wed her for her dower, and not for true love of her: but now 'tis thought best to let her know the truth, lest she should throw herself away. The said Joanna is now nineteen years of age, tall, and active, and of singular beauty; hath eyebrows black as jet, and do meet so remarkably as, in an Englishwoman, must needs draw notice. She hath been traced to London, and it is thought she hath crossed the seas. Whoever will give information respecting her, shall receive a reward of FIVE HUNDRED GUINEAS.

"She had her mother's jewels with her. But they are now her own.

"From my sorrowful prison at Staines, January, 1739–40."

Advertisement! — It was a cry from a prison, and a cry from home, that knocked at her very heart. She uttered a responsive cry herself, as if the prisoner's cry had sounded in her ears; and then she devoured the words once more, feeding on every syllable in great amazement. But presently the letters grew hazy; her filling eyes saw them no more, and, in their place, came the pleasant meads of Colebrook, the English landscape, humble, but sweet, the gray old church, with the swallows twittering round: her dear parson's scholarly face, the white-headed children before each cottage clad with rose and eglantine. Then her heart gushed to her eyes in a stream, and the wanderer lay softly back in a chair, quite motionless, and let the sweet tears flow.

Then came the desire to act; to fly home, and save that poor bereaved father, and live amongst her folk. How should she manage it? she had jewels secreted about her, any one of which was worth more than a slave's ransom. Why not go to McCarthy; tell him who she was, and offer him a diamond ring for her liberty? Why not? because he might have her seized for wearing man's clothes, and throw her into prison for life, so severe was this colony in that matter. No; she could not endure the shame; nor run the risk. She would take one of his horses, and ride by night to Philadelphia; and make terms with him through some other party. One thing alone she did resolve — not to lose an hour, but to be gone that very night. One day lost, and the prisoner's life might pay for it. Yes, she would go, and take James Annesley with her. She took up the sleeping draught, and went to his room. She made him drink it, and then covered him up warm, and took his hand in hers. "James, dear," said she, "I am a happy — creature. I have news from England: sad news, after a manner — yet sweet: and I am going home."

"Going! — Ah, well: God's blessing and mine go with thee."

"Why, thou foolish man, I go not without thee. This very night we ride to Philadelphia, and thence to England."

James shook his head, sorrowfully. "There is no escape for a slave. I have tried it."

"Ay, all alone, and on foot, without money or means. But 'tis different now. I shall command the expedition; I, who, by your leave, possess the two capital gifts of a commander, which are forecast and courage; forecast, by which I do foresee all possible accidents, and provide for them; and courage, whereby I overcome and trample under foot those petty dangers that scare a mere ordinary man like thee. What's this?"

"What is what?"

"I smell a smell I never could abide. 'Tis a cat. I know 'tis a cat. There! there she is, — coiled in the mouth of that sack. I shall faint, I shall die."

"Why, here's a coil about poor puss. 'Tis the stable cat, and loves to come here."

"Well, she goes forth, or I."

"Open the door then, and fling thy cap at the poor harmless thing."

"I call not foul things harmless, especially when they are all claws. I like not your cats, even when they are called Christinas."

While Philip was driving out the "harmless necessary cat," James criticised him. "Why, 'tis like a girl to be afear'd of a cat. But indeed you are more like a girl than a boy, in many things. You hate women more than is natural, and you turn your toes out in walking; and you carry your hand so oddly when you walk."

"Mercy on us, how?"

"Why, you turn it out sideways, and show the fingers. I walk with my thumb straight down."

Philip turned very red, but said pertly, "All which proves that I was born of a woman. Now you were born of a goose. I'm man enough to be your master, and this very evening you shall ride with me to Philadelphia."

"You are my master, and I own it," said James: "my master by superior learning, wit, and daring, only the courage comes and goes most strangely. But, good my master, for all that, I cannot ride with thee to-night."

"Oh, say not so, James. Why not?"

"I could not sit a horse, for my life."

"Alas! how unfortunate we are. James, think me not unkind; but I must go to-night; with thee, or without thee."

"You must go without me, then; for indeed I am not able."

"But perhaps you may be by nightfall. Have a good sweat, and a good sleep; and I'll come again at dusk; for, O James, I *must* go; and I am loath to leave thee."

Then Philippa retired, and went and made some slight preparation for the journey she had resolved to take: but, in the midst of it all, her hands fell helpless, and her heart revealed itself to her. She could not go. Love burst through all self-deception at last. She loved him; had loved him long; and now loved him to distraction. Leave him on his sick-bed, and among enemies: no, not for a day. She had honestly intended — if he could not come — to fly to Philadelphia, sell her jewels, and buy him of McCarthy: but, now it came to the point, she burst out crying, and found she could not leave him in trouble, no, not for an hour. "Nay," said she to herself, "but I will come at night and hector him, and taunt him, and coax him, and try all my wicked arts to get him to go with me: then, if he cannot, I will pretend to go without him, but I'll slip back softly, and lie on the mat at my darling's door. None shall come to hurt him but over my body."

Meantime, James received another unexpected visitor. There was a gentle tap at the door; and Mistress Christina glided in. He was surprised, and tried to rise and receive her; but she put up her white hand, that he should not move. Then she sat down by him, and, with the most cajoling tenderness, expressed her regret at what had occurred. "Why," said she, "will you trouble about that man whom you know I have discarded?"

"He was there to tempt you, madam."

"More likely through jealousy; seeing me favor you, perhaps he suspected me of speaking to you at all hours.

But once more, James, trouble not about him. Has he hurt you?"

"Nay, madam, not much," said James; "a few bruises, that I am to sleep away. He got as good as he gave, I know."

"That is true," said she, gravely; "he is much cut about the face, and you have knocked out one of his front teeth."

"I will knock his head off next time."

"I will give you leave to kill him — *next time*," said the lady, calmly. "Meantime, prithee get well — for my sake. I'll send you something to do you good." She then kissed her hand to him, and went softly out.

Before she had been long gone, Philip's potion began to work, and James fell into a fine sleep and a violent perspiration.

Presently there was another tap at the door, and as the sleeper did not reply, Chloe entered, with a large basin of strong soup prepared by the white hands of Christina herself. Chloe was followed by the late discarded cat, returning now with lofty tail, sniffing the savory mess. Chloe, finding the patient asleep and perspiring, had the sense not to awaken him; only, as she thought it a pity the soup should cool, she put it down by his bedside, calculating that the smell might waken him, as it would her. To keep it warm, she put "Plutarch's Lives" over it, and then retired; it was about four o'clock.

Now, if James was asleep, puss was not. He turned about the leg of the table, sniffing; and at last sprang boldly on to the bed, and from the bed to the table. Here he found an obstacle in Plutarch. Plutarch covered the soup, not entirely, but too much for puss to get a nose in. He sat quiet a few minutes, then he applied his fore paw and nose and made a sufficient aperture.

Then he found the soup too hot. Then he sat on the table a whole hour, waiting. Then he arose and gradually licked up nearly half the soup: then he retired quietly, and coiled himself up.

James still slept on his balmy sleep, till just before sunset. Then he was awakened by a violent knocking.

He looked up, and there was the poor cat in violent convulsions, springing up to an incredible height, and hammering the floor with his head when he came down.

James got up, unconscious of his late pains, and threw some water over him. He thought it a fit; but, after a few violent convulsions, came piteous cries, and the poor creature stretched his limbs, and died foaming at the mouth.

James soon discovered the cause, in the stolen soup.

His blood ran cold. He fell on his knees, and thanked God he was alive. But how long? what would not hate so diabolical as this attempt? He seized his knife and prepared to sally forth.

At this moment he heard a whistle under his window.

"Ah!" thought he, "a signal of assassins." He instantly dragged his bed and other things to the door, to impede an attack from that quarter, and then went cautiously to the window. To his great relief it was Philip who had given that signal. He opened the window directly. "O Philip! They have tried to poison me!"

"Ah! who? who?"

"Christina herself. Sent me soup. The cat stole some, whilst I slept, thanks to your medicine, — you are my preserver, — and see, the poor cat is dead." He took the cat's body and flung it out. Philip recoiled with a cry of horror. "Come forth!" he cried. "Come forth! or they will murder thee yet. O my love, come forth to me."

"I will, I will." And in a moment he tore away the bed and other things from the door, and ran down to Philip. Philip had lost not a moment, but was getting the two best horses out. James helped him. Without a word more they saddled and bridled them, and Philip sprang into the saddle; his black eyes were gleaming with a strange fire.

"Take that dead beast before thee," said he; "and I'll give thee liberty and vengeance."

They galloped off over the soft ground, Philip leading, and took the road for Philadelphia.

They did not venture to speak till they got clear of McCarthy's premises, but then James told Philip of Christina's visit and cajoleries, followed by murder.

Philip said, "'Twas in her eye. Ah, thou foul cat! but I'll be even with thee;" and Philip ground his teeth audibly, and his eye shot fire in the moonlight. "My poor James," said he, "that would not harm a mouse!"

About five miles from McCarthy's they passed his brother's farm. They passed it a hundred yards or so, and then Philip drew the rein, and haltered his horse to a gate, and made James do the same. "Now take that dead Christina in thy hand," said he, bitterly, "and follow me." He marched up to the farm, and asked for William McCarthy.

"What want you?"

"We are two servants of his, come with news of life and death."

"You shall find him at supper with the rest."

Philip walked boldly into the noisy supper-room, followed by James. "Silence all!" said he, with a voice like a clarion; and the room was still in a moment.

"Master, have you money in your house?"

"Ay," cried McCarthy, half rising, and turning pale;

"more than I can bear to lose. But 'tis in the safe, boy. None knows it but my daughter."

"Am I your daughter? Yet I know it. Your daughter has a mulatto to her lover, and they have planned to rob you of your money, and fly."

"The proof!" roared McCarthy.

"The proof is this: James there overheard Christina and Regulus plan the robbery. He taxed Christina with it, and she tried to cajole him; but, failing in that, and knowing he would tell you, like a faithful servant as he is, she this day essayed to poison him."

Here there were some exclamations. "Ay, sir," continued he; "the cat, by God's mercy, stole a little of the soup while he slept: now look at that cat's body, and judge for yourselves."

The cat was instantly examined.

Philip did not stop for that. "Now, master, take your weapons, and to horse this moment, and save your goods, if there be yet time." Mr. McCarthy and his brother, and two or three men, ran out. Philip turned to the others, and, folding his arms, said boldly, "Sirs, ye are Christian men, and white men like ourselves; is it your will that good servants of your own flesh and blood shall be poisoned, like rats?" There was a roar of honest disclamation. "And all because Christina McCarthy is so lost to shame as to wed a black and rob her own flesh and blood. Then, sirs, to your justice we two commend our cause. There is the poisoned beast, to prove our words, and half the poisoned soup in this good young man's room over the stable. Punish them with everything short of death. James and I will keep away a little while; for, if we testify, the judge might hang her. Give you good-e'en."

Having delivered this bold but artful speech, he retired with James, and, the moment he got outside the

door, whispered him, "Now run for't, or they will keep us to testify in their courts." They ran off like the wind, untethered their horses, and, springing into their saddles, rode rapidly off, keeping the side of the road at first, to dull their horses' hoofs. They rode all night, and, with the earliest streak of dawn, entered the fair town of Philadelphia.

McCarthy and his party, twelve in all, caught the mulatto and Christina in the very act of levanting with McCarthy's money. They made short work of them: bound Regulus to a tree, and flogged him within an inch of his life, with Christina tied to a chair close by, and the dead cat in her lap. Then they drummed the mulatto out of the district, and sent Christina to a farm in Massachusetts to clean pots and pans in the kitchen for a twelvemonth and a day.

CHAPTER VI.

Philip, being commander, sent James to one inn, and went to another himself. He said that was most prudent, to avoid discovery: but his real motive was different. He had a very difficult game to play. His wit, however, proved equal to it. Remembering that his father was a lawyer, he inquired for an old lawyer, a gray-headed one: he stipulated severely for gray hairs. When he had found his gray-headed lawyer, and liked his countenance, he did not make two bites of a cherry, but told him all, and showed him the advertisement.

The lawyer easily got her eighty gold pieces, on the security of her diamond cross, and gave her a room on his own premises, where she could dress herself in any costume she liked, without being reported.

Meantime, James Annesley was not idle: he saw a notice up that Admiral Vernon's ship was short of hands, and he went and engaged himself to serve on board her; he promised to bring a much smarter fellow next day, meaning his mate Philip.

When they met in the evening, he told Philip this, and Philip was much vexed at first. "Oh! why will you do things without asking me?"

However, on reflection, she acquiesced, and, with true feminine tact, altered all her plans, to meet this unexpected move. She told James she would go on board the ship; but in another capacity. She had friends and money, and would work for both. Only, for a day or two, he must not expect to see much of her.

The lawyer sent the horses to McCarthy, and advised

him not to trouble any more about the servants, as they were under his care, and he might have to go into the poisoning business if they were molested.

Soon after this, a young lady in her mask called on Admiral Vernon at his lodgings, and asked him if he would take her home in his ship.

"Zounds, madam! no," said the admiral; "no petticoats aboard the King's ship."

"Alas, sir! say not so: do but cast your eye over this advertisement. Indeed 'tis no common case; 'tis a matter of life and death, my going in your ship." The admiral read the advertisement, and cried out, "What! Accused of murder? Gadzooks! what fools these landsmen be! Are you indeed the gentlewoman they seek?"

"Ay, noble admiral. Deign to regard my foul eyebrows, that are all published to the world so barbarously in this advertisement:" and the sly puss removed her mask, and burst on the sailor in all her sunlike beauty. At this blaze, he began to falter a little. "'Tis pity to deny you; but why not go in the first ship of burden?"

"Sir, none sail this week, and they are too slow for my need, and, in truth, I'm afear'd to be drowned, if I go in any other ship but the one you do command. O admiral! you are too brave to deny the weak and helpless in their trouble."

"Madam," said the admiral, "you mistake the matter. 'Tis of you I think. I am a father; and a ship of war is not the place for young gentlewomen."

"But, sir, I am discreet, and know the world: and I can wear my mask, and keep close. O noble sir, have pity on me, and let me sail in your good ship." Then, with her lovely eyes, she turned on, what I, laboring to be satirical, call the waters of the Nile. Then the admiral rapped out the usual oaths of the sea and the century, and said she had done his business; "a sailor

"MADAME," SAID THE ADMIRAL, "YOU MISTAKE THE MATTER."

was never yet proof against salt water from a woman's eye."

He then told her where his ship lay in the Bay of Delaware, and his day and hour of sailing: she must come out in a boat, and he would charge an officer beforehand to see her safe aboard.

Philippa returned to her lawyer in high spirits, and sent him to James, with a note in her own hand, directing him to go on board the English flagship next day at six in the evening, and she would follow the day after, before the ship sailed. James did as he was bid. At noon next day a boat brought a lady in her mask, alongside; and James, who was looking out anxiously for Philip, saw her taken on board, with her boxes, — for she had found time to shop furiously, — and handed respectfully to her cabin; but James did not recognize her, nor dream this tall gentlewoman was little Philip.

At two P.M., the admiral was seen coming out; the yards were manned directly, and he mounted the quarterdeck, with due honors, and the next minute the pipe was going, and the men's feet tramping to the capstan, whilst others hoisted a sail or two; and the anchor was secured: and the ship bowed, and glided, and burst into canvas, and the busy seamen all bustled, and shouldered poor James out of the way, with salt curses, as he ran about the ship asking wildly for Philip, and describing him to coarse fellows who only jeered him.

One faint hope remained; Philip might be down below: but the next day dissipated this; Philip never showed his face, and this puzzled and grieved James Annesley so, that even the prospect of liberty and home could not reconcile him to the loss and seeming desertion of this tender and faithful friend.

The officer in charge of the new hands now called on James to do some very simple act of seamanship. He

bungled it, and there was a good deal of hoarse derision to which he replied, at last, a little sadly, but with good temper, "Men are not born sailors, are they?"

An officer at the other side of the deck heard this reply, and was struck with the voice, or the face, or perhaps with all three, and called to him. He came respectfully, and removed his cap.

"Sure I have seen that face before," said the officer.

James started, and said, "I have seen yours, sir; but where?"

Said the officer, "I'll tell you that. Is not your name James?"

"Indeed, sir, it is."

"Son of Lord Altham that was."

"Yes, sir; but how — oh, 'tis my kind school-fellow!"

"Ah! I am Mat Matthews, that set you on your way to Dublin. I took a good look at you that day; and I seldom forget a face I look at so; but what means this disguise, in Heaven's name? You have been reported dead, in Ireland, this many a year. Where have you been? Is this a frolic, good sir, or hath fortune used you crossly?"

"Sir," said James, "I'll tell you in a word, but a word full of misery: my uncle Richard kidnapped me, and sent me to the plantations; there have I been a slave this many a long year, and even now escaped by a miracle."

"A slave! You, a lord's son, a slave! Kidnapped, and by Richard Annesley, say you? Why, 'tis he now holds your father's lands and titles. Perdition! Here is foul play! The knave! 'Twas to steal your lands and titles he spirited you away."

"Indeed, sir, I always did suspect it. Such villany was never yet done for the love of God."

"Sir," said Captain Matthews, "sit you down: and

not another rope shall you handle in this ship." He ran, with his heart in his mouth, to the admiral; and his warm-hearted Irish eloquence, burning with his schoolfellow's wrongs, soon fired the honest sailor. They agreed that this was the real earl, and his uncle a felon, whom the sight of the true heir would blast. "And now I think on't," said Matthews, "Arthur Lord Anglesey is dead, and Richard Annesley has succeeded to *his* lands and titles too; so that there is one of the greatest noblemen in England and Ireland a sailor on board this ship—and a very bad one."

"That may not be," said the admiral; "overhaul the wardrobe straight, and rig him like a lord, as he is, and make us acquainted." He added, with a touch of delicacy one would hardly have expected, "I'll not see him in his sailor's jacket, nor seem to know he hath been brought so low."

CHAPTER VII.

It was a beautiful moonlight night; the great ocean was calm, and the light airs so gentle, that snow-white studding-sails were set aloft to catch them.

The Honorable James Annesley, in a suit of blue velvet laced with silver, gold-laced hat, and jewel-hilted sword, paced the deck, and admired the solemn scene, the incredible sheen of the rippling ocean kissed by moonbeams, the ship's gigantic shadow, that ran trembling alongside, and the waves like molten diamonds, that sparkled to the horizon.

His tide had turned: finery on his back; a hundred gold pieces in his pocket, that Matthews, a man of large fortune, had insisted on lending him; a popular admiral conveying him home an honored guest.

Yet it seemed there was something wanting; for, after he had enjoyed the scene awhile, he sat down upon a gun, and meditated; and his meditation was not gay, for soon he heaved a sigh.

Now this sigh caught the quick ear of a young lady who had not long emerged upon deck. It was Joanna Philippa Chester, who never showed herself by day, but took the air at night, and even then had always her little mask in hand ready to whip on. Joanna was farther still from complete happiness than James was. Her breast was torn with doubts and fears and shames, for which my reader, who has only seen her fitful audacity in boy's clothes, may not be quite prepared. She was now all tremors and misgivings, and paid the penalty of her disguise. Under that disguise she had fallen deep

in love with James Annesley, yet inspired him with no tenderer feeling than friendship for a boy. That knowledge of the heart, which an inexperienced but thoughtful woman sometimes attains by constantly thinking on its mysteries, told her that between love and friendship there is a gulf, and that gulf sometimes impassable. Philip might stand forever between James and Philippa.

And, besides this, for a girl to wear boy's clothes was indelicate; it was condemned by law, it was scouted by public opinion. James Annesley, even in his humble condition, had shown a great sense of propriety; and she felt, with a cold chill running down her back, that he was not the man to overlook indelicacy in her sex, much less make an Amazon his wife; and now, as she had learned with her sharp ears, the story he had told her was confirmed, and he was the real Earl of Anglesey, and all the less likely to honor a tomboy with his hand. For three whole days she had longed and pined to speak to him, yet fear and modesty had held her back. She could not bear to be Philip any more; yet she dreaded to be Philippa, lest she should lose even Philip's place in his regard.

Even now, the moment she saw him seated, with the moon glittering on his silver lace, and his jewelled sword, and his dear shapely head lowered in pensive thought, her first impulse was to recoil, slip down into her cabin again, and torture herself with misgivings, as she had been doing all the voyage.

But love would not let her go without a single look. She turned her eyes on him, that soon began to swim with tenderness, as she looked at him. She stole a long drink of ineffable love, and the next moment she would have been gone; but he sighed deeply, and she heard it. Then the habit of consoling him, and her yearning heart, were too much for her. By a sudden impulse she whipped

on her mask, and stole towards him. She trembled, she blushed; but all the woman was now in arms to defend that love which was her life.

He heard her coming, looked up, and saw a tall young lady close upon him, dressed in the fashion, with a little silk hood, and a mask that hid all but her mouth. He rose, removed his hat, and bowed ceremoniously. She courtesied in the same style.

"Forgive me, sir," said she; "I fear I interrupt your meditations."

"Most agreeably, madam."

"Methought I heard you sigh, sir."

"I dare say I did, madam."

"I was surprised, sir; for I hear you are a gentleman of quality going home to high fortune, after encountering her frowns. Sure that should make her smiles the sweeter."

"Madam, it may be so; but my enemies are powerful. I may find it very hard to dispossess the wrongful owners."

"And 'twas for that you sighed."

"Not at all, madam. I sighed for the loss of a dear friend."

"Alas! What, dead?"

"Now, Heaven forbid!"

"False, then, no doubt."

"I hope not; but I am sore perplexed, for he never failed me before."

"He? What, 'twas only a man then, after all?"

"'Twas a boy, for that matter; but what a boy! You never saw his fellow, madam. His head was all wit; his heart all tenderness; his face all sunshine. He brightened my adversity; and now when fortune seems to shine, he has deserted me. O Philip! Philip!"

"Philip! was that his name?"

"Yes, madam."

"Is he a dark boy?"

"Yes, madam, yes."

"About my height?"

"Oh, no, madam, not by half a head."

Philippa smiled at that, and said, "Then, sir, you shall sigh no more on his account, for I happen to know that same Philip is here, in this very ship."

"Is it possible? God bless you for that good news, madam. O madam! pray bring him to me, for my heart yearns for him. Why, why has he hidden himself from me?"

"Nay, sir, you must have patience. The boy is not so much to blame. He is in trouble, and dare not show his face on deck. I wonder whether I may tell you the truth?"

"Yes, madam, for heaven's sake!"

"Well then, the truth is — ahem — he is here disguised as a woman."

"You amaze me, madam."

"And if you were to accost him as Philip, 'twould be overheard, and might be his ruin: if you can be so much his friend as to fall into this disguise, and treat him with distant civility, while he is on board the ship, I'll answer for him he will come to you, not to-night, but to-morrow night at this time."

James Annesley eagerly subscribed to these terms.

Next evening he paced the deck impatiently, and, in due course, a young gentlewoman came towards him, with Philip's very face, but blushing and beaming.

James ran to meet her: devoured her face, and then cried, "It is! it is! oh, my sweet Philip!"

The young lady drew back instantly in alarm, and said, "Is this what you promised? Call me Philip again, or offer the slightest freedom, and you shall never see me again. My name is Philippa."

"So be it, thou capricious toad. I am too overjoyed at sight of thee, to thwart thy humors. Thou wert never like any other he that breathes."

"I shall be more unlike them than ever, now," said she. "Methinks my disposition is changed, since I put off my boy's attire: and the worst of it is, all my courage hath oozed away."

"It had always a trick of coming and going, Philip."

"Philippa, or I leave the ship."

"Well, Philippa, then."

"What sort of a gentlewoman do I make?"

"Nay, if I knew not the trick, I should take you for the most beautiful woman I ever saw."

Philippa blushed with pleasure. "And you look beautiful too," said she. "Fine feathers make fine birds."

He then scolded her gently, and asked her why she had deserted him.

"Well, I'll tell you the truth," said she, and delivered him a whole string of fibs.

She met him next evening, and the next, and so mystified him by her beauty and her bashfulness, that he questioned Matthews and the admiral about the young lady; but Matthews knew nothing, and the admiral pretended to know nothing, she having sworn him to secrecy.

Philippa was offended at his curiosity, and sent him word he had done very ill to ask other persons about her: she should not come on deck for ever so long.

She kept her word, though it cost her dear: even when they touched at Jamaica, and everybody else landed, she kept her cabin. But when they left Jamaica, she took another line. She came openly on deck now and then in the daytime, and removed her mask.

The effect may be divined: the officers of the ship treated her like a queen, and courted her with all possi-

ble attentions; these she received with singular modesty, politeness, and prudence: and her heart being sincerely devoted to one, her head was not to be turned.

James Annesley looked on with wonder, and a dash of satire, to see men all but kneeling to a boy: but he soon got jealous, and the other men opened his eyes, and he began to ponder over many things. The truth flashed on him, and Philippa saw it in his face. Then she coquetted with her happiness, and, when he begged a private interview, she put him off.

But when they passed Lizard Point, she came to her senses, and gave him his opportunity.

He was much agitated; she was more so, but hid it better. "Tell me the truth," he cried. "You were always Philippa, and I a blind fool." She hid her red face in her hands, and replied with the charming directness of her present sex, —

"Oh, why did I ever wear those abominable clothes?"

"Nay," said James. "Why did you ever doff them? for, see now, you have killed the friend of my bosom."

"I'm glad of it," said she, with one of her shows of spirit.

"And will you give me nothing in exchange for him?"

"Alas, James!" she cried, "what can I give you that you will love as you did him? *I hate that boy.*"

"Nay, do not hate him; but for him I had never known the greatest, truest, tenderest heart that ever beat in woman. O Philippa, you saved me from despair, you saved me from servitude: I never could love another, now you are a woman; be my bosom friend still, but by a dearer title; be my sweetheart, my darling, my wife."

"Ay, that or the grave!" she cried: and the next moment he held her curling round his neck, and cooling her hot cheeks with tears of joy.

They landed at Portsmouth, took a kind leave of the admiral, to whom they owed so much, and, accompanied by Captain Matthews, dashed up to Staines with post-horses, four at every relay. When they came near to the town, she bade the driver post to the prison. She demanded to see Jonas Hanway. He was called into the yard, and, at sight of her, gave a scream of joy, and they had a cry together, and forgave each other. She feed the jailer to send to the proper authorities, and take the necessary steps for his liberation. Then she went on to Thomas Chester, who lived outside the town by the river-side: but Matthews left them in the town, and went on to London, on his way to Ireland. He had inherited large estates, and was about to leave the King's service.

Thomas Chester, though a man not easily moved, gave a loud shout when his niece ran to him: he folded her in his arms, and thanked God aloud, in a broken voice, again and again.

When they were a little calmer, he said to his man, "Send abroad, and let them ring all the church bells for three miles about; I'll find the ale: and thou, Thomas, bring in our young lady's things. She is mistress of the house."

Then they went out, and found two boxes, and one James Annesley, seated peaceable. "And who is this?" said the old man, staring not a little.

"'Tis only my — my James," said she, as if every young gentlewoman had a James; but the next moment her cheeks were dyed with blushes. "Dear uncle, he has been my friend and companion in servitude, and some do say he is the" —

"Whoever he is, he hath brought me thee, my sweet long-lost niece, and must lie at my house this happy night." So he received James cordially, and put off all

inquiries till the morrow. The next morning James told him, of his own accord, he loved Philippa, and was so happy as to have won her affections. He also spoke of his wrongs, and said he was Lord Altham's son, and dispossessed by the uncle who had kidnapped him; and he should go into Ireland at once, and hoped to punish his uncle, and make Philippa Lady Anglesey. He proved himself in earnest, by starting for Ireland this very day. The parting with Philippa was very tender, and left her almost inconsolable, being their first real separation since they knew each other.

So the wise old lawyer let her have her cry out. Next day he told her what the young man had said.

"Alas!" said she: "he is gone on a wild-goose errand, I fear: and, as for me, I would not give one straw to be Lady Anglesey; to be Mrs. James is heaven enough for me: and, alas! if any ill befall him in that savage Ireland, I shall always think 'twas because I was not by him as heretofore; and you will have but one more trouble with me — to bury me."

"Niece," said the old man, "craving your pardon, you are pretty far gone."

"Never was woman farther," said she frankly. "I am fair sick with love. My James carries my heart and my life in his bosom, go where he will:" and she leaned her head prettily on the old man's shoulder.

"Hum!" said the lawyer, and dropped that subject, not possessing even its vocabulary.

He waited a reasonable time, and then cross-examined her. "My young mistress," said he, "have you told your sweetheart you have thirteen thousand pounds? and, now I think on't, 'tis nearer fourteen thousand, by reason of your folly in going and getting your own living, instead of spending it."

"Have I told James? No; not yet. I found out my

father's will, by that advertisement, and, since he wished it kept secret, I have held that wish sacred."

Mr. Chester told her she had done well. Lord Anglesey had been long in possession; and it was not likely he would be ousted without a fearful litigation, in which her little fortune might easily be swamped. "No, Philippa," said he, "still go by your father's will, and by my lights, and let us not risk one shilling of your fortune. Your husband can never be a pauper, while that remains in *your* hands." She caught that idea in a moment, and gave her solemn promise.

The first letter from Ireland served to confirm her uncle's wisdom. James wrote to say that he had been to a dozen attorneys, and they all refused to take up his cause against a nobleman so powerful as Lord Anglesey, and who had been years in possession without a voice raised against his title.

However, a day or two after writing this, James Annesley fell in with a long-headed attorney, called McKercher, who listened to his story more thoughtfully than the others, and went so far as to ask him for a list of the people he thought could bear out his statements. Having got this, Mr. McKercher found Farrell and Purcell, and, by means of them, one or two more not known to James Annesley; and they established the kidnapping.

Then McKercher began to think more seriously of the case. He called on Mr. Annesley at his lodgings, and found him and Matthews taking a friendly glass, and talking the matter over. McKercher made three, and said over his glass that the kidnapping was certainly a fine point; but it would be worthless without direct evidence to Mr. Annesley's parentage, and money would be required, to ransack the county of Meath for evidence, and for other purposes; for money would certainly be used against them freely.

The warm-hearted Matthews offered a thousand pounds directly, to begin: thereupon McKercher's eyes glittered, and he hesitated no longer: all three went out to Mr. Matthews's house that day in cars of the period; and next day rode on his own horses to ransack Meath and Wexford for evidence.

They found some little evidence, and McKercher secured it; but there were two enemies in the field before them. Death was one, Lord Anglesey the other. This nobleman had got a fortnight's start, in rather a curious way. Admiral Vernon anchored off Jamaica a few days. It got wind that he was bringing home the real Lord Anglesey. The *Daily Post* announced it, and the *Gentleman's Magazine* copied, as indeed may be seen in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1741.

Death, the other antagonist, had been unusually busy since James Annesley crossed over the bar of Dublin. Lady Altham — dead. Mrs. Avice, to whom she had spoken of a son — dead. The chaplain who he believed had christened him — dead. His sponsors, male and female — dead.

But McKercher was not to be baffled: he hunted up the old servants of Dunmaine House, and, from one to another, he began to create that pile of testimony which even now stands on record to prove this obscure man the Napoleon of all attorneys, living or dead. He, and James, and Matthews, rode hundreds of miles after evidence; till one night Annesley was fired at from the edge of a wood, and two slugs whistled close by his head.

They all spurred away, in great alarm.

When they got to the town they were going to, tactful McKercher set to work that moment and printed bills, describing the attempt, offering a thousand pounds reward, and, by subtle insinuation, accused Lord Anglesey

of the crime: he got up what we now call a demonstration; showed his handsome client to the public, on a veranda stuck over with bills thus worded: —

"THIS IS THE HEIR. COME, LET US KILL HIM, THAT THE INHERITANCE MAY BE OURS."

For all that, he sent Annesley back to England directly. "It is too pretty a suit to be abated by a bullet," said keen McKercher.

James Annesley returned to Staines, and found the roses leaving Philippa's cheek. Ere he had been back a week they bloomed again.

McKercher circulated his bills in Dublin, with a guarded account of the attempted assassination, just keeping clear of an indictment for libel. One of the bills was sent over to Lord Anglesey by a friend.

The nobleman at this period began to lose heart. His estates were large, but encumbered: he had been, for years, amusing himself with trigamy; and trigamy had entailed its expenses. All the ladies had to be dressed as if there was but one Lady Anglesey; and you may see, by Miss Gregory's bill, that those noble brocades, though cheaper in the end than the trash we call silk, were dear at first. Then the three ladies had children, and one of the three was so ill-bred as to indict my lord, and had to be bought off.

Then he had Charles Annesley and Frank Annesley on his back. Francis Annesley, an English barrister, claimed a large portion of the estates, and filed his bill in England. Charles Annesley had a large claim under Earl James's will, which claim Richard, Lord Anglesey, had lately compromised for a third, and then, with his usual perfidy, evaded the compromise, whereon Charles obtained a decree with costs, and a sequestration, under the terms of which Charles now received all the Irish

rents, and paid himself his share. The earl, therefore, was in the power of Charles Annesley for his very subsistence.

On the top of all this came James Annesley, armed with McKercher, and hard cash, of which his lordship, like many other Irish proprietors, had mighty little, compared with the value of his estates.

Thus attacked on all sides, and influenced probably by some reasons not easy to penetrate so long after the event, he began to falter: and being at his house in Bolton Row, which house the writer of these lines (be it said in passing) occupied for some years, a century later, he sent for his London solicitor, Giffard, and directed him to try and effect a compromise with Jemmy, as he called him.

Giffard was too cautious to commit his client to writing, in a matter so dangerous, but he intimated to McKercher that he had something important to say, if McKercher would come to London. McKercher wrote back very courteously to say he was very busy collecting evidence, but would wait on Mr. Giffard in a fortnight. In anticipation of this conference, Lord Anglesey told Giffard on what terms he would resign his estates, and live in France. He even went so far as to engage a French tutor.

Meantime James Annesley was a guest of Mr. Thomas Chester, and a favored suitor for his niece's hand. The old lawyer liked James, and, at this time, hardly doubted he was the real heir to the late Lord Altham, and he intimated plainly that if Mr. Annesley would allow Philippa's dower, whatever it might be, to be settled on herself, they might marry as soon as they chose, for him.

Young Annesley smiled at this stipulation. "I hope to settle half the counties of Wexford and Meath on

her, besides," said he. So one Sunday morning the lovers were seated in a pew, with their heads over one prayer-book; her dear old tutor delivered certain ephemeral words that seemed to this happy pair to have a strange vitality, compared with the immortal part of the liturgy. Said he, in a sonorous yet kindly voice, "I publish — the banns — of marriage — between the Honorable James Annesley, bachelor, of the parish of Dunmaine, in Ireland, and Mistress Joanna Philippa Chester, spinster, of this parish. This is the first time of asking. If any of you know cause or just impediment why these two persons should not be joined together in holy wedlock, ye are now to declare it."

While these words were delivered, Philippa's face was a picture: her eyes lowered, her cheeks mantling with a gentle blush. The words rang strangely in those lovers' ears.

How tight custom holds civilized men and women, and flies them but with a string! both had led adventurous lives, had been slaves in a distant colony, and this demure lass, with long black lashes lowered, had played a fine caper in boy's clothes. Yet there they must sit at last, over one prayer-book in Staines Church, and hear their banns cried in one breath with two more couple that had never budged out of Middlesex.

Let the reader now contemplate this pretty picture, and James Annesley's prospects, a rose-colored panorama. In Ireland, his interests pushed by that rarest of all friends, an able and zealous attorney; in London, his arch enemy losing heart, and preparing to accept an income, and retire from the disputed estates to Paris; in Staines, his hand in sweet Philippa's, and holy wedlock, the sacred union of two pure and well-tried hearts, awaiting him in one little fortnight: even that fortnight to be spent in sight of paradise, and the gate ajar.

Writers are human; and I feel myself linger here, for it grieves even hardened me to have to plunge again into the misfortunes of the good: but now are my wings of fancy clipped, hard Fact holds me with remorseless grasp, and I am constrained to show how all this bright picture was shivered in a day, and by the man's own hand.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Thomas Chester had retired from the law, with a comfortable fortune. He was now a bit of a sportsman; rented of Sir John Dolben the right of fishing the Thames for some distance, and of shooting over a part of the manor, and paid half Sir John's gamekeeper. He was a man that respected the rights of others, and stickled for his own. He did not mind a stray cockney fishing his perch, roach, and gudgeons, with a hook, for that was fair sport; but he was bitter against all who poached on his water with nets, for he said, "They rob not me only of my fish, but my fish of their lives; 'tis not sport, 'tis larceny."

Annesley had often heard him say this. One day Annesley came out with his gun to Redding, the gamekeeper, and they were about to go out together shooting waterfowl; this was the only sport to be had, for it was the 1st of May.

As they were about to start, Redding cast his eyes round and saw one Thomas Eaglestone and his son casting a net from Sylvester's meadow. "There is that old rogue again," said he. "Let us have his net." He set off to run, and Annesley ran after him, to help. Redding came up first, and collared Eaglestone. But he, to save his net, threw it half into the river: then young Eaglestone seized the cord, cut it, and jumped into the river. Annesley snatched at the net, and his gun went off. Old Eaglestone cried, "Villain, you have slain me," and fell, scorched and bleeding, on the ground, and never spoke more. The boy swam away to the other bank,

and the smoke of the gun drifting away revealed the man lying in the agonies of death, and Annesley and Redding so stupefied and appalled, that they did not move hand or foot, but gazed with terror at each other, and at their bloody work.

They had but just realized that the man was shot, and in the agonies of death, when young Eaglestone was heard to cry across the water, "My father! they have murdered him."

Then Redding seized Annesley by the arm, "Heard you that? They will hang us," and set off instantly to run, which cowardly and imprudent course Annesley, who was quite unnerved, unhappily imitated, scarce knowing what he did. They got to Redding's house, and Redding laid his hand on all the money he could, and fled the country: but Annesley would go no farther. He said, "I have slain an innocent man, and let me die for it." He sat a little while, with his head and his hands all of a heap, and then fell on to the floor in a fainting-fit. There were three women in the house; they raised him, and just then the constables were seen coming with young Eaglestone. What did these wise women do, but drag him up-stairs, and hide him in a sort of partition between two floors; and there the constables, who had sure information he was in the house, found him without any trouble. This hiding told heavily against him, both then and afterwards. In such terrible cases courage is the better part of discretion.

They found him in a state so deplorable, that they set him in a chair in the yard, and sprinkled his face with water; and he was some time before he could command his limbs and walk with them to the justice.

A number of people followed the officers, and when they came upon the bridge, James stopped, and said, "Have I no friends here?" Then there was a cry of

"Ay!" for indeed he was already respected in that part. "Then," said he, "I do implore you, throw me over the bridge, and end me; for I have slain an innocent man, and shall never more know peace."

The justice sent them to Sir Thomas Reynell, and he heard the evidence, and committed him.

They had five miles to go, and all drank together on the road, and things were said over the liquor that afterwards affected the case.

As for James Annesley, he fell now into a dull resignation, and his regret was greater than his fear, except for Philippa. He gave one William Duffell a crown piece to go to Philippa, and beg her not to believe one word she should hear, except from his own lips. "Speak comfortably to her, good William, or this will kill her too." And then for the first time he began to cry and bemoan himself.

Duffell sped on his errand; but others had been before him. Remorseless rumor came open-mouthed to Mr. Chester's house, and told Philippa, James Annesley had murdered a man.

She was as white as a sheet in a moment, and trembled; but her faith supported her. "'Tis false!" said she. But tongue followed tongue, and, as the vulgar always exaggerate and add, a crop of lies were ingrafted into the little bit of truth, and threats and oaths were said to have preceded the firing of the gun. Even Philippa's faith was giving way under repeated attacks, when Duffell came in with that comfortable message.

She cried out, as if he could hear her, "Believe thee a wilful murderer? That I never will. Unfortunate thou always wast; but guilty never." Then she said she would go to him on the instant. "Where is he?"

"In the Cage at Hounslow."

She was with him in less than an hour; and, with the

two pale faces close together, he told her how it had happened. She believed him; she consoled him; she treated it as a simple misfortune, for which he must grieve, but could never be punished; and she left him greatly encouraged. But her words were bolder than her heart; and, when she reached home, the great restraint she had put upon herself for love of him gave way, her body overpowered her great spirit, and she had faintings one after another that laid her low. Though prostrated herself, this noble girl dictated words of comfort to her unfortunate lover every day, and Thomas Chester carried them. Mr. Chester exerted himself to bail James Annesley, and appeared likely to succeed, when suddenly one Giffard, a London solicitor, appeared for young Eaglestone, and objected with such ability and weight, that Sir Thomas Reynell said he must consider the matter and take advice. Then Mr. Chester saw that Annesley was to be prosecuted vindictively; and he conceived some grave suspicions, and began sadly to fear the final result of this unhappy business.

What I have now to relate will show the reader his suspicions were well founded.

CHAPTER IX.

It was eleven o'clock on the 2d of May. The Earl of Anglesey lay in state, receiving visits in bed. On the sheets beside him lay his peruke superbly powdered and adorned with a Ramilies tie. A servant held a small glass before him, and while he talked to his visitors, he tinged his cheeks with carmine, and put on his patches as openly as if these things were essential parts of a toilet.

His conversation was mighty vapid, affected, and lisping, until his courier, Lawler, knocked loudly at the door, and said, "I must speak with my lord on the instant."

"Ask him where he comes from," said my lord, laying aside his affectation.

The man burst into the room, and answered, "From Staines, where you left me to watch James Annesley; and, my lord, I bring strange news."

"Fling a bottle of scent over him, and leave us in private," said Lord Anglesey.

This was done, and Lawler told him James Annesley had killed a man at Staines, and was now in the cage at Hounslow.

"What fool's tale is this? I can't be so fortunate."

"Nay, my lord, 'tis the truth; but some say 'twas accident, others say 'twas done of malice."

Lord Anglesey's eyes glittered. "So say I, and I will prove it, if money can do't."

He gave the man a gold piece, and dismissed him; dressed himself in half an hour instead of two hours as usual, and went at once to his attorney, Giffard, told him

the good news, and that all thought of a compromise was at an end. "Go down to Staines on the instant," said he, "and tell me can we hang that knave." Giffard went down and saw young Eaglestone and others, and reported that John Eaglestone could hang or transport James Annesley. "Then," said Lord Anglesey, "you must be his lawyer, and I will find the money, if I pawn my diamond ring."

Giffard did not much like the business, but he undertook it, sooner than lose his noble client. He advised Lord Anglesey on no account to appear in the business, or he would prejudice the prosecution; and he himself saw young Eaglestone, and easily moulded him to Lord Anglesey's purpose, by rousing his cupidity, and also his desire of vengeance for his father's slaughter.

Thus the Crown was used as an instrument of private vengeance; yet who could object? Only the son and his attorney were seen. The ruthless man who bribed the witnesses and spurred the law was in the dark.

But they were not to have it all their own way. James had written post-haste to McKercher. He handed over the other business to his clerk, Pat Higgins, and came at once to Hounslow; saw the prisoner, found Giffard was in it, whom he knew to be Lord Anglesey's attorney; saw Anglesey behind Giffard, and his very first move in the case was one that had never occurred to Thomas Chester, nor to any other friend of Annesley's, though many were coming about him now. He put Lord Anglesey under a system of espionage as complete and subtle as ever Fouché brought to bear on a man; and he told nobody but Philippa, and bound her to secrecy. This done he proceeded to the legitimate defence, and left no stone unturned. But he could never get at the most dangerous witness, young Eaglestone. Giffard kept him too close.

He encountered Giffard once or twice, and always

treated him with profound respect; separated him entirely from his client, and charmed him with his good temper and urbanity. "Ah, sir," said he, "if you knew Mr. Annesley, his goodness, and his misfortunes, you would regret the severity you are compelled to show him."

"I regret it now," said Giffard.

Just before the trial, Philippa, who was all zeal and intelligence, secured a piece of evidence to prove that the boy Eaglestone had not been so confident the gun was fired purposely, until Giffard came on the scene. But, with all her efforts, that was all she could do for her lover now. How different from former times, when she was a boy!

She spoke of her helplessness to McKercher, with tears in her eyes, and told him it had not been always so.

"Helpless, madam!" said McKercher: "by the hoky, beauty is never helpless. You have found him a witness that I'd never have heerd of, maybe, and ye can do him a good turn at the trile, if you have the courage to come."

"The courage to come!" cried she. "I have the courage to die for him, or die with him. Of course I will be there, with my hand in his all the time, to show that there's one who knows he is not a murderer."

"Ah, if they'd only let us," said McKercher, with a sigh. "But I'll have you on the bench, ony way, an' I'll find some way to let the jury know they'll have to strike at his head through your heart, alanna:" and the warm-hearted sharper was very near crying.

The dreadful day of the trial came at last. Philippa was seated on the right hand of the judge's seat, but on a lower bench. She was dressed, by McKercher's advice,

in black silk, with a small head-dress of white lace, and no ornament but a diamond cross on her bosom. There she sat, in a frame of mind beyond the pen to paint. This was her first court of law; her first trial. The solemnity, the ancient usages, and all the panoply of justice, struck upon her young mind in one blow with the danger of him whose young life was bound up in hers: and for this reason I shall briefly describe this trial from her point of view; and the reader who has imagination will do well to co-operate with me, by putting himself in her place, as well as in the place of the accused.

First there was the usual hardened buzz of lawyers, to whom this terrible scene was but an every-day business. Philippa heard with wonder and horror. What! could men chatter when a life, and such a life, was at stake?

Then came in the judge, in ermine and scarlet, and all stood up. Philippa eyed him as a divinity on whom her darling's life depended.

Then the prisoners were brought to the bar, Redding having surrendered. Philippa uttered a faint cry, instantly suppressed, and her eye and her lover's met in a gaze that was beyond words.

But here the proceedings were disturbed for a moment, by the entrance of a gorgeous gentleman, in scarlet and gold, powdered peruke, and Ramilies tie, who stalked in, and seated himself by the judge. This was Lord Anglesey, come to gloat over the criminal, and keep the witnesses for the prosecution up to the mark. He stared on the public as on so many dogs, and on James Annesley with a bitter sneer. James was all in black velvet, with weepers, as one who mourned the death he had caused.

Silence having been obtained, the prisoners were ar-

raigned, and the indictment charged against James Annesley, laborer, that he, not having God before his eyes, but moved by the instigation of the Devil, on the 1st of May, with force and arms, in and upon one Thomas Eaglestone, feloniously, wilfully, and of malice aforethought, did make an assault, and that he, the said James Annesley, with a certain gun, of the value of five shillings, being charged with powder and leaden shot, did discharge and shoot out of the said gun, by force of the gunpowder as aforesaid, and him the said Thomas Eaglestone in and upon the left side of the belly of the said Thomas, did strike and penetrate, giving to him, the said Thomas, on the said side of his said belly, one mortal wound, of the breadth of one inch, and of the depth of four inches, whereof the aforesaid Thomas then and there instantly died. The indictment then repeated the nature of the act, describing it, in the usual terms, as wilful murder, and against the peace of our Lord the King, his Crown and dignity.

The virulent terms of the indictment, being new to poor Philippa, made her blood run cold; for it seemed to her that the Crown thirsted for his blood, and would not stick at any exaggeration to hang him.

The Clerk of Arraigns now put the usual question, in a loud voice: "How say you, James Annesley, are you guilty of this felony, or not guilty?"

James Annesley, thus called upon before judge, jury, enemy, and sweetheart, showed unexpected qualities. Though a man of unsteady nerves when hurried, he lacked neither dignity nor courage — give him time — and what little bile he had in his nature was stirred by the sight of the man who had kidnapped him as a child, now hunting him down as a man. Instead of simply pleading not guilty, he objected to the terms of the indictment. "I observe, my lord," said he to the

judge, respectfully, but firmly, "that I am indicted as a laborer. Now, 'tis well known that I claim the earldom of Anglesey and great estates, and am likely to make good my claim elsewhere. This word 'laborer' therefore can never have come from the mind of the Crown. Kings are gentlemen; they do not insult the gentlemen whose lives they seek. Surely there is some private malice behind the Crown."

This observation being received in dead silence, he asked his lordship to let him be tried within the bar, in respect of his quality.

"Certainly, Mr. Annesley," said my lord. But he thought to himself, "I shall have to hang you all the same."

Then both prisoners were allowed to sit within the bar.

Then the jury were sworn, and Sergeant Gupper opened the case in the close dry way of a counsel who feels that the facts can be trusted to do the work. He stated that the Eaglestones were fishing in a meadow that belonged to one Sylvester, and that Annesley and Redding came on to the ground, and first threatened Thomas, with foul language, and then shot him; and, even after that, threatened John; but he escaped across the river, and brought the constables after the prisoners, who, well knowing their guilt, had fled: but Annesley was found hidden in Redding's house, and dragged forth, and afterwards offered the boy money not to come against him: but he said, "I will not sell my father's blood."

When this neat outline was delivered with perfect sobriety, everybody looked at the prisoners, and Annesley in particular, as dead men.

The counsel for the Crown called John Eaglestone first. He swore to the preliminary matter, which was

indeed, undisputed, and declared that, while Redding was collaring his father, Annesley threatened the old man's life, with a ruffian-like oath, if he did not give up his net; and then, not waiting for the old man's answer, *shouldered* his gun and shot him dead, and afterwards threatened *him* with the butt end of his piece, but he escaped by swimming, and ran instantly for the constables. He swore also to the hiding of Annesley, and his subsequent attempt at bribery.

Philippa, at this stage, felt all the bitterness of death, and could scarcely sit upright.

In cross-examination John Eaglestone was asked whether he had not given a different account to three persons, Duffin, and Dalton, and Thomas Chester. He looked staggered a moment, but boldly swore he had not.

McKercher then showed his teeth. Counsel, carefully instructed by him, drew from the witness that he was now living with one Williams, whom he had not known before this trial, was called his servant, but dined at his table.

Counsel. — Of course you have seen my Lord Anglesey at Williams's?

The Court here interrupted, and said the question was improper.

A juryman, however, asked this boy a very pertinent question, whether there was no jostling or struggling for the net between Annesley and him. He said "No."

Many other witnesses were called for the Crown; but they were all at some distance, and only proved the killing. Fisher, indeed, one of these witnesses, said that he saw Annesley snatch at the net, and then the gun went off.

This rather contradicted Eaglestone, and gratified the juryman aforesaid.

This Fisher, though a witness for the Crown, admitted

under cross-examination, that, within two hours of the event, young Eaglestone had told him he believed the act was not done designedly.

Counsel for the Crown then commented on the evidence, dwelt upon the sanguinary threats that had been proved, and not disproved on cross-examination, and demanded a verdict.

This closed the case for the Crown.

The Court then called on James Annesley in these terms: "Mr. Annesley, you are indicted in a very unhappy case. What have you to say?"

James Annesley then surprised his friends again. He rose like a tower, and spoke as follows: "My lord, I am quite unable to make a proper defence, having been kidnapped when a child by him who now seeks my life under the disguise of a public prosecutor, and so I lost the education I was entitled to by my birth."

He paused long on these words, and turned his eyes so full on Lord Anglesey, that every soul in court turned too, and looked at him. A shiver ran through the court. It was indeed a remarkable combination; a remarkable situation. In fact, considering that the defendant here was to be the plaintiff in a great civil suit, if he could save his neck, and that the nobleman who sat by the judge in England, to see him hanged, was to be defendant in that suit, should this indictment fail, the situation was, perhaps, without a parallel in all time.

James Annesley resumed: "My lord, you have heard a true and deplorable accident falsely and maliciously described in this court, with a view to stopping lawful proceedings in the Court of Exchequer in Ireland. The simple truth is that neither I nor my innocent fellow prisoner were trespassers. He is gamekeeper to the lord of the manor. It was his duty to seize a poacher's net, and I ran with him to help him. The deceased threw

the net half into the river. The boy jumped in, to swim across with it. I stepped to seize one of the ropes that trailed on the ground, and the gun went off, to my great surprise and grief, and killed a poor man, whose name I did not then know, and he never wronged *me*, and I had no malice against him, nor ground of malice.

"My lord, and gentlemen, mine has been a life of strange misfortunes; but, believe me, whatever your verdict may be, it must always be my greatest grief that I have caused the death of an innocent man."

These words, delivered with great decency and touching resignation, drew tears from many eyes besides Philippa's, and even the judge bowed his head slightly in sober but profound approval of the prisoner's concluding sentence.

Redding, called on for his defence, said that he had seized the net, in discharge of his duty. That, when the man fell, Mr. Annesley did not know that he had shot him, and would not believe him till he turned up the flap of the man's coat, and found the wound; and then Mr. Annesley showed such grief and concern, that he felt sure it was as pure an accident as ever happened in this world. The judge then retired for some refreshment, and there was a buzz of conversation, and by the time the judge returned, everybody in court understood the relation of the parties: the lovers both in black, and that shameless peer, who would hang the young man in England, to stop his lawsuit in Ireland; and the judge sitting in his place, between the defendant's true lover and his enemy.

THE EVIDENCE FOR THE DEFENCE.

They proved, by documents and evidence, that Sir J. Dolben was lord of the manor, and Redding his gamekeeper, with full powers to seize nets, etc. Then, by

Dalton, who was Philippa's witness, that, on the day of the killing, young Eaglestone had said distinctly he believed it was done undesignedly. Then, by two more respectable witnesses, that he had said the same thing next day.

Then they traced his change of mind to Giffard.

Then they went on, and connected Giffard with Anglesey.

Then they went further, and proved that Anglesey was constantly with Williams, and that Williams was keeping young Eaglestone *like a gentleman.*

Thereupon Anglesey turned pale as ashes, and fidgeted on his seat, and Philippa, looking like a woman at the jurymen's faces, turned red, and her eyes flashed, for she saw them cast looks of disgust and contempt at him.

Then they brought two medical men of high character, who had probed Eaglestone's wound, and declared the shot had gone not downwards, but upwards, and, indeed, at a considerable angle, and that the blisters at the *back of the body,* caused by the shot, were several inches higher than the wound. This evidence agreed with Annesley's account and Fisher's, and not with Eaglestone's testimony that the gun had been shouldered.

This closed the defendant's case.

The judge summed up briefly. He said that the sting of the indictment lay in John Eaglestone's evidence. The other witnesses for the Crown had proved nothing but the killing, which was superfluous, since the prisoners admitted it. That, as to Eaglestone's evidence, it was highly damnatory, but unsupported by any other witness, and contradicted in one vital part of it by the two surgeons: in another respect, viz., as to whether the act was intentional, the same witness was contradicted by himself, and in the worst possible way;

for, while the act was fresh in his memory, he had said repeatedly that it was accidental; and it was only when his mind had been worked upon by some person or persons not present at the act, that he had come to say it was intentional. Against Redding there was not the shadow of a case. Against Annesley, the charge of murder had failed; but they must consider whether it was manslaughter or chance-medley. If they thought the gun went off accidentally, it was chance-medley.

The jury, being invited to retire and consider their verdict, said, through their foreman, there was no need for that, as they had made up their minds long ago, and thereupon brought it in chance-medley, which was, in fact, a verdict of acquittal.

The Court then discharged the prisoners on the spot, and in five minutes Philippa and James were rattling down to Staines in a chaise and four, which McKercher, who knew he had made the verdict safe, had provided, and ribboned the horses; he followed in a chaise and pair with Redding.

James and Philippa sat hand in hand all the way, with hearts almost too full for words; and the church bells rang for his escape as they had for hers.

Philippa flung her arms round McKercher that night and kissed him, and blessed him, so that the good-hearted sharper shed a tear. He told her all the blood in his heart was at her service; and what he had done for James that day in England was child's play compared with what he would do for him in Ireland.

He was off to Ireland next day; but he left a sting behind him. Ere he had been gone a month, out came a volume, called "Memoirs of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman," in which, under the thin disguise of "Anglia" for "Anglesey," "Altamont" for "Altham," and so on, a full and interesting account was given of

James Annesley's wrongs, and Lord Anglesey's vices, including his trigamy, and other matters not relevant to James Annesley's concerns.

Lord Anglesey, at this time, was in a stupid, sullen state. He had left the court disappointed, rebuked, and exposed. He stormed at Giffard for his defeat, and quarrelled with him, and would only pay half his costs. Whereupon Giffard sued him. Anglesey employed a solicitor. He subjected Giffard to interrogatories. McKercher heard of them, and subpœnaed Giffard for the Irish trial. Anglesey, though he swore he would run his sword through McKercher at the first opportunity, dared not indict his publisher for the "Memoirs," though libellous. He lay quiet, even when the *Gentleman's Magazine* came out with the whole substance of the book, and made him a by-word throughout the nation.

Nevertheless, this stirred him up an unexpected friend. Charles Annesley wrote to him, and said, "This is a very serious matter. We had better lay aside all differences, and make common cause against this upstart, James Annesley." Lord Anglesey replied that he did not know which way to turn; he had drained himself already, in trying to unmask that impostor in Ireland, and hang him in England.

Charles Annesley replied that he would find ten thousand pounds that year, sooner than see the estates and title transferred to this upstart, by perjury and lying romances.

Thus encouraged, Lord Anglesey drew largely on Charles Annesley, and went into Ireland, and employed agents of all sorts, and poured out money like water.

His presence and influence were soon marked by a sinister event. Pat Higgins, McKercher's clerk, returning to Dublin with valuable notes of evidence, disap

peared, together with his papers. McKercher, whose own corrupt practices were bloodless, vowed he had been bought by Lord Anglesey's men and sent out of the country. But he was never heard of again, and it is the general opinion in Ireland now that he was made away with by persons in the employ of Anglesey.

McKercher now got leases signed by James Annesley, and put his lessees into possession of several farms in Meath. Anglesey ousted them by force, and Campbell Craig, one of the tenants so ousted, who was a tool of McKercher's, served a writ of ejectment on Lord Anglesey in the Irish Court of Exchequer. This brought the matter to an issue, and the cause was set down for trial. Though the actual property in litigation was small, all the Irish estates of Lord Anglesey depended on the verdict in Craig *v.* Anglesey: of that the parties were agreed.

But meantime James Annesley had fallen into deep dejection of spirits. The malicious prosecution had done him good; it had stirred up his resistance; but, now a jury had acquitted him, he could not forgive himself for having killed a man.

McKercher comforted him, rallied him, but all in vain. He actually wanted to drop the proceedings against Lord Anglesey. "He will beat me," said he: "I shall never thrive. I have shed innocent blood."

McKercher was first sorry, then angry, then alarmed. He wrote seriously to Philippa about him, and she wrote back directly, "Send him to me."

In anticipation of his arrival, Philippa made Mr. Chester buy James a horse; and she had a riding-dress made, so masculine that she could speak her mind more freely in it. She had also a country dress for walking made; and, when he came, she encountered his melancholy point-blank with hilarity. "Your spirits want a

philip, sir," said she, "and I must give them one." She rode with him, she walked huge walks with him, she would not let him mope or pine. She was Philip one moment, all vivacity and cheerfulness; Philippa the next, all tenderness; and neither out of place. Her resolution, with her wit, and her tenderness, attacked his despondency with so many weapons, and such minute pertinacity, that at last she drove the dark cloud away, and the man plucked up heart again to fight his enemies, and love his sweetheart as she deserved: and here I cannot help observing that, if this man's misfortunes were almost unparalleled, so his good fortune, in finding so rare a woman as this to love him, was almost as singular. I believe that at this juncture she saved him from the madhouse. Well, she had her reward; she saw the color creep back to the beloved cheek, the brilliancy to the dull eye: she saw the shapely head held up again, and, at last, she heard the beloved tongue bless her for what she had done.

But a deep mortification was in store for poor James Annesley: and one that took him by surprise, and tried his temper and his heart in the very furnace.

Mr. Thomas Chester had been for some time growing rather cold to him; but, seeing him so down-hearted, had not spoken his mind: but he now took an opportunity, and had it out with him. He said, "Mr. Annesley, if you had come to me as a poor gentleman, of no pretensions, I think I should have said to you, 'Show yourself willing to make a livelihood, and you shall have my niece, since matters have gone so far between you.' But you call yourself the son of Lord and Lady Altham; and others say you are not so, for my lady never had a son."

"I assure you, sir, on my honor"—

"And I assure you, on my honor, that you do not

remember the circumstances of your birth, any more than I do mine. Therefore, sir, by the kindness that is between us, I beg of you not to abuse your influence with my niece, by urging her to marry you, unless you can make good your pretensions. I could show you it would be unwise to take any other course, on account of the singular powers Mr. Hanway and myself possess under her father's will: but I prefer to appeal first to your honor and delicacy."

James Annesley, though wounded to the heart, replied, with perfect dignity: "Mr. Chester, after the stain that has fallen on me, I have never asked my dear Philippa to marry me; but, since you offer her to me on condition that I can prove my birth before a jury of my own countrymen, I take you at your word; and so be it. And, sir, I bear you no ill-will for this. You are an honest man, and Philippa's true friend, and to be her friend is to be mine."

"That is very handsomely said, young man," said Mr. Chester.

Annesley thought over this for an hour or two; and, after dinner, he burst out before Philippa: "Sir, you have roused me from my lethargy. I value Philippa's hand more than I do the lands and title I have been robbed of. I shall start for Ireland to-morrow."

"So soon?" said Philippa.

"Ay, sweet one," said he: "and, if I am not the true Earl of Anglesey, I will never trouble you again, nor your good uncle."

Philippa turned pale, and knit her black brows at Mr. Chester. "Uncle," said she, "you have been saying something to him."

"No more than my own conscience says to me," replied Annesley, before the old lawyer could speak a word.

James Annesley stood firm, and parted from Philippa tenderly, but hopefully, next day. Philippa was inconsolable, and kept her room. When she did reappear, her uncle saw, with regret, that he had lost her affection.

She scarcely spoke to him, never volunteered a remark, and treated him with a bitter coldness that distressed him. However, he felt sure he had done his duty, and his niece would see that, too, some day. So he remained firm. But he was uncomfortable, to say the least. She went about the house pale and gloomy, knitting her magnificent brows, and never speaking, nor smiling, except when she got a letter from James, and then it was as if the dead had come to life; ardent kisses on the paper, eager devouring of the contents, eyes streaming; and then away to some secret place, to read it again all alone.

At last he made an appeal to her one day. He said, gently, "Philippa, let me ask thee a question. Dost thou really think Thomas Chester is thine enemy?"

The girl hesitated, and then said, "Why, n-n-no."

"Thou knowest he is not, but loved thy father dearly, and loveth thee. Then would it not become thine years to say, 'This is an old, experienced man, who loves me. Let me not condemn him hastily, lest I fight against my own good.'"

The sullen eyes began to fill at that: but never a word.

However, he said no more; for he saw the shaft had gone home.

But two days after this came a letter to say that the trial, after several postponements, was to be that day month by special appointment; and that McKercher was hopeful, though not confident. The assassination, or spiriting away, of Higgins, with his notes, the fruit of two months' research, was very unfortunate.

The letter had been a week coming.

Philippa brought it to Mr. Chester, and coolly putting her arm round his neck, as if their attachment had never been interrupted, she said, "Uncle, dear, please you read that."

So he smiled, well pleased at being "Uncle dear'd" again all of a sudden; and he read the letter. "Well," said he, "at all events, it will end his suspense and yours."

"Uncle, dear," said the young lady, "you asked me, did I doubt your affection? Well, of course you cannot love as *he* doth; but I do think you love me a little, in your way. But that I shall soon know; for I shall put it to the proof. Uncle, dear, if you love me, go with me straightway to — Dublin."

He started, and then said, "That is as if you should say, 'Sweet uncle — I know you love me — take me into the pit of torment.'"

"Oh, fie, fie!"

"What else is litigation? If I take you to Dublin, you will be in court, as you were at the Old Bailey, sore against my wish: and here 'twill be ten times worse; for you will hear him taunted by counsel, and exposed by a score of witnesses, and defeated in the end."

The young lady smiled superbly. "Uncle," said she, "you are learned in the law, no doubt; but most unlearned in women's hearts: each word you have spoken, it is a chain of steel, and draws me to Dublin by the heart. Had you but said, 'He will surely win, and can be happy without thee for a time,' I had yielded: but, when you tell me he shall be defeated and shamed over there, then am I here on hot coals, and cannot bide. Know that I love him as men cannot love. I grudge him no triumph all to himself, no solitary joy. But trouble — and I not have my part! shame — and I not

blush with him! Nay, but I tell you, not one sup of grief, sorrow, shame, or any mortal ill, shall *ever* reach his lips but I *will* have my share on't, by the God that made me; ay, made me for no other use that I know of, but to console my darling, that is the very pearl of goodness, and the butt of misfortune from his birth."

She clasped her hands with angelic fervor, and was gone, with the words.

The old lawyer looked after her admiringly, but sadly. "She is too good to last," thought he. "I fear she is like her father, and will ne'er make old bones." Then he fell into one of the long reveries a thoughtful old man is subject to, since the past offers a larger landscape to him than to the young.

He had been thus an hour and more, when in came a swift foot; he looked up, and there stood — Philip, in the very clothes he had last worn at Wilmington; he had put on, with them, his old audacity, with which, however, a hot blush was doing battle.

"Now, uncle," said he, sharply, "how is it to be? Will you go to Dublin with Philippa, that is a poor, timid creature, afraid of men and mice and everything, or shall Philip go alone? Philip, that fears nought, and feels like Alexander the Great at this moment; the Lord be praised for doublet and hose."

Mr. Chester interrupted her. "Thou brazen toad, come hither, and let me look at thee. What, is this indeed the disguise thou didst prank thyself in out there?"

"Ay, uncle, and will again, — if you are unkind. Come now, good sir. Time flies. How is't to be?"

Mr. Chester uttered a groan of resignation. "Needs must, when the devil drives," said he. "Go you up-stairs this minute, and doff that masquerade. To-morrow we will set forth, and be in Dublin this day week, God willing."

CHAPTER X.

PHILIPPA was welcomed with surprise and rapture by James Annesley.

McKercher wore a blank look, that did not escape Philippa, but he recovered himself, and was rather violent in his expressions of satisfaction. Nevertheless his original face of utter dismay imprinted itself on her memory, and puzzled her for some time. She told him she should be present at the trial. He assented, with a great show of warmth, and, having assented, began to raise one objection after another.

"It will be the longest trial ever known."

"No longer for me than for him."

"The court will be crowded to suffocation."

"What strangers can bear, I can."

"'Twill be a bitter fight this time."

She did not deign a reply.

"'Tis pity you should hear him taunted by their counsel and their witnesses."

"I have borne to hear him charged with murder."

"There will be hard swearing: they have forty witnesses."

"When I know all that malice can say against him, then I shall be the better able to comfort him."

Her face, with its native power and indomitable resolution, lent double effect to her words. McKercher gave in, and said, with a sort of admiring sigh, "Och, sure thin, go which way it will, he's a lucky man."

She was too lofty to affect to misunderstand him. She said, simply, "It is the one piece of good fortune

in his hard, his cruel lot;" and then a gentle tear stole down the lovely cheek, and McKercher was subdued entirely, and, keeping his misgivings to himself, made it his business to get her and Thomas Chester excellent seats at the trial. It was one of great expectation. When Philippa entered the court, a very large and commodious one, the floor was already crowded with the public, and, before she had been there ten minutes — for she went early — all the seats about the bench, and below the bench, were filled with Irish peers and peeresses, gorgeously dressed, and the gallery crowded with citizens and their wives.

Presently the claimant entered with his friends; not dressed in black, as at the last trial, but in a rich suit of purple velvet, and a gold sword-hilt. He wore an air of composure, but Philippa could see that he was flushed with excitement.

A sort of doubtful murmur ran round the court when he took his seat; but several of the ladies whispered in favor of his personal appearance, which, indeed, was captivating.

Lord Anglesey and his friends came in soon after, and he took his seat; but first he looked round the court, and exchanged bows with all the most distinguished persons present.

His eyes and James Annesley's met, and James turned a little pale at the sight of this implacable foe. He remembered the day he was kidnapped. The earl, more self-possessed, stared at him with a sort of over-looking air; and after that ignored him utterly. The general feeling was in favor of Lord Anglesey. They were great worshippers of rank in Ireland, and his lordship's rank was established; the chances were, this claimant was an upstart.

Everything betokened an extraordinary battle. The

prodigious number and various dresses of the witnesses on both sides, and the number of counsel engaged, thirteen for the claimant, led by Mr. Marshall, second sergeant, and fifteen for the defendant, led by prime sergeant Malone, the ablest counsellor of that day, either in Ireland or England.

And now the judges were announced. Hooped dresses rustled as that brilliant assembly rose, and no less than three judges entered, in their scarlet and ermine, to sit on this important case; for it was a trial at bar.

The jury's names were called: they were all gentlemen of good position; there was a baronet and a right honorable amongst them; and the only objection to any of them was that a couple had unexpired leases under Lord Anglesey. McKercher, however, declined to object to them on that score. Their swords were girded on them in court, and the trial began.

Mr. Sergeant Marshall opened the case of the plaintiff's lessor, which I shall ask leave to call the claimant's case.

It was one that lent itself to a rhetorical opening; but the learned sergeant took the other great line; in a speech which is worth study as a model of condensation, and strong sobriety, he articulated his topics, and marshalled an army of facts to prove — 1. That James Annesley was the son of Lord and Lady Altham. 2. That the defendant had kidnapped him, and sent him out of the country, and, failing in that attempt to get rid of him, compassed his death in London, by a prosecution the character of which he should not describe, but leave it to the witnesses.

But able speeches of counsel are no rarity, and this trial offered something not only rare, but marvellous; two piles of evidence, each as high as a tower, and each contradicting the other in nearly all the particulars directly affecting the issue.

They proved by Mrs. Cole and by two servants, that in 1714 Lady Altham had expectation of offspring, and Mrs. Heath, her gentlewoman, knew it.

Then they advanced a step, and proved by John Turner, seneschal to successive Earls of Anglesey, that in the spring of 1715, Lady Altham was manifestly expecting her confinement; and a year or so after he saw her teaching a child to walk. By Bartholomew Furlong, a peasant farmer, that in 1715 her condition was notorious; that, as ladies of rank never nursed their own children, he applied personally to Lord and Lady Altham for his wife to be the nurse, and came to terms with them, subject to Dr. Brown's approval. But Dr. Brown did not approve of Mrs. Furlong. This was confirmed by Dennis Redmond, a groom at Dunmaine, 1714–16, who said the doctor selected for wet-nurse Joan Landy, a cleanly bright girl, that lived on Lord Altham's land.

By Dennis Redmond. That early in the summer of 1715, Mrs. Heath sent him to Ross — three miles from Dunmaine — to fetch Mrs. Shiel, a professional person, since dead; and he brought Mrs. Shiel to Dunmaine on a pillion, and that same day a son was born.

By Joan Laffan, chambermaid. That she was in the *house* when this son was born.

By Mary Doyle and Elinor Murphy. That they were in the *room* when this son was born.

By Captain Fitzgerald. That he being quartered at Ross, Lord Altham asked him to dinner, and to *tap the groaning drink.* (What we call caudle.) Then he came to Dunmaine House, saw the baby in the nurse's arms, and gave her half a guinea. Had seen the same nurse in court that day. "I took notice of her, sir, because she was very handsome, if you will have the truth of it."

By Alderman Barnes, of Ross. That Lord Altham dined with him in Ross, on the alderman's return from

a visit, and said over the bottle, "Tom, I'll tell you good news. I've a son by Moll Sheffield." Whereupon he shook his head in disapproval. "Zoons, man!" says my lord, "why, she's my wife!" Then I begged his lordship's pardon, for I remembered my Lady Altham was daughter to Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham.

Redmond Doyle, Murphy, and Laffan, servants in the house at the time, and Christopher Brown, servant to Anthony Cliff, at Ross, swore to the subsequent christening, accompanied with a bonfire, and such carousing that "some of them were *drunk in the ditches to the next morning.*" They all named as the sponsors three persons who were since dead, Anthony Colclough, Councillor Cliff, Madame Pigot, and the clergyman, dead, too.

To cure this excess of death, they proved by Southwell Pigot, Esq., it was always received in the Pigot family that Lady Altham had a child.

They proved by Joan Laffan that this child was nursed by Joan Landy at her own house, a cabin; and that the said cabin was embellished on this occasion, and a coach-road made to it by which Lady Altham went daily to see the child. That, in due time, Master James was weaned, and then came into Dunmaine House; and there she, Laffan, was his dry-nurse and sole attendant. That in February, 1716, Lord and Lady Altham parted in angry manner about Tom Palliser, "whose ear," said she coolly, "I saw cut off," and Master James pointed to the blood on the floor. Laffan and Redmond both swore that they saw the actual parting; and Lady Altham cried and begged to have James. But Lord Altham would not let her.

This witness went on and swore that Lady Altham retired to Ross, and the Dunmaine servants took James to her clandestinely, which was confirmed by Lutwych, a shoemaker, at Ross, who swore Lady Altham ordered

child's shoes of him and bemoaned herself. "I had better be the wife of the poorest tradesman in Ross, for then I could see my child every day; but now I can only see him by stealth."

To conclude their evidence about the deceased Lady Altham, they followed her to Dublin, and John Walsh, Esq., swore she had cried to him over her husband's cruelty, but had thanked God "for an indulgent father and a promising young son, who would be a prop to her old age;" and Mrs. Hodgers, who let lodgings in Dublin, deposed to a solitary conversation, in which Lady Altham, finding her to be English, gossiped with her, and told her she had a son.

They followed James from Dunmaine to Kinna, Carrickduffe, and other places where Lord Altham had resided, and proved by several witnesses he had been always dressed, powdered, booted, and horsed like a nobleman's son till he was more than ten years of age. Then they proved Lord Altham's entanglement with Miss Gregory, and also his poverty, to account in some degree for the boy being deserted at that time. In proof of his poverty, one witness swore that *when he kept hounds, one hound would eat another.*

They then opened a vein of indirect evidence founded on the words and deeds of Lord Anglesey, the defendant. They grafted this into the case very neatly, thus:

They proved by several witnesses that Lord Anglesey was constantly in communication with Lord Altham, and often at Dunmaine and other places, and they made it clear that Lord Anglesey knew for certain whether James Annesley was or was not his brother Altham's lawful son. This done, they proved by Laffan that she knew defendant well, and that he came home to Dunmaine a few months after the parting, and asked after Jemmy, and she told him my lady had begged hard for

him, but my lord would not let her have him. Then the defendant swore an oath, which she repeated verbatim, when questioned, and attested that blessed name to which all Christians bow, that *he* would have let Lady Altham have the boy, and take him to the devil; "for," said he, "I would keep none of the breed of her."

Having grafted this branch, they grew it high.

They called Dominick Farrell and John Purcell; the latter lamish, and with a staff, but sturdy still.

Foreseeing the terrible difficulty under which I now labor, I stuck close to Purcell's sworn evidence in those earlier scenes he figures in. So please turn back to those scenes, and imagine every word you find there sworn to in open court before the principal actors in the scene — the child, now grown to man's estate, and the barbarous uncle, both glaring at each other, also before Philippa and her eyes that poured black lightning at her lover's treacherous enemy, and before the excitable Irish crowd, that roared and raged like wild beasts at Purcell's every other sentence. He told how he had taken the claimant off a horse in Smithfield, and carried him to his wife, etc.; the first visit of Captain Annesley to his house, when the boy was all terror, but Richard Annesley all politeness; Lord Altham's death, Richard Annesley's changed behavior, and attempt to kidnap him. He told his tale simply, yet well; anybody could see, by his emotion and earnestness, he was not inventing, but living a real romance over again. Once or twice, in relating his sturdy answers to Lord Anglesey, he involuntarily struck his stick down upon the table, and so pointed his speech: but, when he came to the first attempt at kidnapping, and told how he put the boy between his legs, and dared that craven lord and his three bullies, with his single cudgel, he suddenly waved his staff round his head with a gesture so impulsive,

that a roar of admiration and sympathy burst from the crowd, followed by a buzz that interrupted the proceedings for some minutes.

Tenderer feelings were aroused among the tenderer: for, upon this, all the scene came back to James Annesley, and he made an eloquent motion of his hands toward the champion of his childhood, and then buried his face in his handkerchief. Many tears were shed all round.

Asked to identify poor little Jemmy, if he could, John Purcell pointed at once to James Annesley, and said, with manly emotion, "That is the gentleman. I KNOW HIM AS WELL AS I KNOW THE HAND NOW UPON MY HEART."

This witness's cross-examination only led to fresh triumphs. He was asked with a sneer whether all those persons could not have taken the child from him had they really meditated violence. He replied, "NO, SIR," and struck the table with his staff. "I'D HAVE LOST MY LIFE BEFORE I'D HAVE LOST THE CHILD."

At this there was a loud huzza, and the very peeresses about the bench waved their handkerchiefs to the honest fellow, and Philippa could have hugged them for that.

Having admitted he had afterwards seen him in a livery, he was asked if he still thought he was Lord Altham: he replied, frankly, that it had staggered him; "but still I thought so in my conscience: FOR MIGHT MAY OVERCOME RIGHT."

This line rang in Dublin that day: and, a century after, rang round the world; for the Wizard of the North wove stout John Purcell's very line, and one more out of this marvellous trial, into his immortal romance.

Andrew Conner, proprietor of the ship James, of Dublin, proved by the ship's books that James Annesley sailed in her for Pennsylvania at a certain date.

James Reilly and Mark Byrne, two rakehelly fellows, swore they were bribed by Anglesey to kidnap him at that date. They added to my account some particulars of the boy's cries and tears, and the impotent curses of the crowd as they hurried him on board the ship James, of Dublin.

Being now the sixth day of the trial, they closed this vein of evidence, and the claimant's case, by calling the defendant's own English attorney, Giffard. He deposed that he had been, for a long time, Lord Anglesey's man of business in England, and knew his affairs. Having suits with Lord Haversham, and the Annesleys, and being now menaced by the claimant, defendant said to Giffard, he would be glad to compound for two or three thousand a year, and surrender titles and estates to James Annesley; for it was his right, and, for his part, he would rather his brother's son should have all, than Frank and Charles Annesley: and, in that case, he would live in France. Accordingly, he sent for Mr. Stephen Hayes, to teach him the French tongue.

Q. — And pray what altered his resolution?

Giffard, in reply, told the truth, as you see it in my narrative, about the homicide at Staines, with this addition: "He said he did not care if it cost him ten thousand pounds, if he could get James Annesley hanged." He also described the clandestine way in which it was managed, the money wanted in the prosecution coming to him through Jans, Lord Anglesey's factotum.

The plaintiff's case closed, leaving Lord Anglesey an object of immense horror and disgust, and James Annesley the darling of the public.

Said Philippa, "After this, why do they not give him his rights, and have done with it? That miserable old man might have spared himself this exposure, by merely giving his title and estates to the rightful owner."

Says Chester, "It *is* odd, how people cling to these trifles, when they have held them undisturbed for a few years." Then, more gravely, "Niece, do not deceive yourself. We know nothing of the other party's case, as yet, and our own is prejudiced by this conduct of McKercher; he has done a monstrous thing, he has published a libel of the defendant."

"A libel of the defendant! Who can libel that old villain? Who can paint him half as black as nature has made him?"

"The blacker he is, the less need to write a novel about him. Why, in England, the defendant would have attached him for contempt of court. A pretty attorney!"

"He is a lawyer with a heart; that is all his fault. My James had been kidnapped by the old villain, and all but hanged, and he tried to assassinate him here in Ireland, and you cry out because poor, good, kind McKercher replies to bullets, halters, and ten years' slavery — with a book, a few words that break no bones, a few home truths, that the villain himself hath made to be so. This is your justice! this is how you cold-blooded lawyers hold the balance. Oh! if my eyes could kill the caitiffs, body and soul, I'd give you something more to cry for. Prithee, speak to me no more. Men with hearts are a sealed book to you. There — I would not forget the respect I owe you. I have done it once. For pity's sake, uncle — that prince of villains hath fifteen counsel to gloze his crimes for him: why need you make the sixteenth, and drive me mad?" She trembled, and her hands worked, and her eyes flashed fire.

The old man looked at her, thought of her father, and said, softly, "That is true, and I am silenced, completely silenced."

"Better so, than for us to quarrel. Forgive me,

uncle, but I do not love my James by halves, and indeed I am but a woman, and so strung up by this terrible trial, as I should quarrel with my own father, if he said one word against my James."

"Nay," said the old man; "I never said a word against thy James; and never will. He is an honest man, and hath been cruelly used: and he is not to blame that his attorney writes novels *pendente lite*."

The defendant now opened his case, and called a cloud of witnesses.

Aaron Lambert, Esq., lived near Dunmaine: never heard of nor saw a child of Lord and Lady Altham's. He impeached Joan Laffan's credit, unshaken by her cross-examination. He said, "Nobody would believe her, in my opinion, if she swore all the oaths in the universe."

Thomas Palliser, Esq., a squireen, lived but three miles from Dunmaine, and visited there. Never heard of a son and heir: but had understood there was a boy about, whose mother was one Joan Landy.

William Napper swore that Lord Altham was not succeeded in his estates by the present defendant, but by Arthur, the then Lord Anglesey: that he, the witness, acted for Earl Arthur, and took possession of the Ross estate, on which were near a hundred tenants, and not one made any scruple, nor mentioned a child of Lord Altham's.

Thomas Palliser, junior, delivered a romance illustrative of the time. He was young, and intimate with Lord and Lady Altham. Lord Altham told him one day he was determined to part with her, because he had no child by her: subsequently, by a "principle of selection" that looks rather odd to us English, my lord made his confidant the handle. He asked him to breakfast on mulled claret in a little room of Dunmaine House, called

"Sot's Hole" (a name that would have been more correctly applied to the mansion in general), and, after breakfast, made what the French dramatists call a "*fausse sortie;*" pretended to go to church, of all places. Palliser, having no other company, went to my lady's room, and sat on a stool. Presently there was a whistle, my lord and his servants burst in, cudgelled him, and while he was insensible, "CUT OFF THIS EAR; AND THEY MIGHT AS WELL HAVE KILLED ME AS DONE THAT." He then swore there was no child in the house at that time — contradicting Laffan.

William Elms confirmed Palliser, junior, that the child came into the house after Lady Altham's departure. He swore Joan Landy had a child that lived with her, and was miserably dressed till Lady Altham left. Then it was taken into the house, and clothed. After that he came to Dunmaine one day, and saw the child playing at Lord Altham's feet, and Joan Landy came to the gate, and peeped in; and my lord swore, and told the man to let the hounds out and set them at her. He then said he would not for five hundred pounds the child should know that jade was his mother.

Thomas Rolph swore he was butler at Dunmaine until Michaelmas, 1715. Between Michaelmas and Christmas, 1715, was discharged, by letter from Dublin, for *beating the gardener very heartily.* Now this covered the period of the birth; and all the plaintiff's witnesses but one had sworn Charles Magher was the butler at this period. Rolph could name more servants than any of the claimant's witnesses could. There was no Joan Laffy there in all his time. Juggy Lundy, as he called her, was discharged, and her child was born soon after: and he went to her hut to see her. "She lay upon straw covered with a caddow, and a hurdle at her head, to keep the air of the door from her. There was a place at the feet

of the bed, where her brother lay, and on the other side her father and mother; and there were stakes drove into the ground and wattled to keep the straw together." When he first visited her, her child was but a few days old, and he asked her whom she called the father, and she told him. He deposed that he had often seen the child after that, and given the mother broken victuals at the stables, and, before he left in Michaelmas, 1715, the child could go alone, and ran about with a sort of blanket on its shoulders, and nothing else. This child was christened, at Nash, by Father Michael Downes. Lady Altham never visited Joan's cabin, that he knew of. She was as proud a woman as any in Ireland. She had heard a scandal, and forbade the woman the house.

This closed that day's proceedings, and poor Philippa's throat was very dry, and her heart sick, and her mind amazed, to hear people swear such contrary things. "Ah, my child," said Thomas Chester, "why would you come here?"

Mrs. Anne Giffard lived near Dunmaine. Was familiar with Lady Altham. Never knew her to have a child. Undertook to prove an *alibi* for her at the time assigned for her birth. She went in a coach with Lady Altham to the spring assizes at Wexford, 1715. Lord Altham and Mrs. Heath rode with them on horseback. Jack Walsh, of Moniseed, Masterton, his nephew, and one Doyle, an English clergyman, all Pretender's men, were tried. She and Lady Altham were in court, and Cæsar Colclough, Esq., sat by them all day.

This *alibi* was sworn to by Rolph also, and Mrs. Heath.

Now came a pictorial figure of another class: for if all the costumes in this single trial could be faithfully produced, the miserable meagreness of our authorities on that head would be very striking. It was a priest, with

his cassock, his huge shoes with iron buckles, and his cockle hat, Father Michael Downes. Had now lived forty-two years one mile from Dunmaine House. Dunmaine is in his parish. "No one could have a child in that parish, and I not know it. Lady Altham never had one: and Joan Landy had: it was in the year 1714. I was asked to christen it, but *was rather shy of doing that until I got a father.* Finally I bethought myself *there could be no harm done to me for making a Christian: so I christened him.*"

He deposed, further, that Lord Altham afterwards asked him, had he christened Joan Landy's child. "I said, 'I have: *but I have got no retribution,*' meaning christening money. 'Well, well,' says he, 'I'll requite you hereafter.'"

He deposed, further, that, some years after, he saw the boy at Dunmaine House, and Lord Altham swore at the child, and said, "Why don't you get up and make a bow to him that made you a Christian?"

He kept a registry, and, by his own account, kept it vilely. *Thought* he would have registered a legitimate child by Lord Altham, *if my lord had desired him.* Was not used to register illegitimate children, and gave his "exquisite reasons," as Shakespeare hath it.

There now stepped upon the table one of the main pillars of the defence. A tall, elderly Englishwoman, a glance at whom showed her condition. There was an air of decency about her; her clothes were well made, though they were not rich, her full apron from waist to ankle, her snowy cap, puckered, and some lawn about her bosom, were very fine, and beautifully clean, and showed she had lived with gentlefolks. This was Mrs. Mary Heath, referred to by so many of the plaintiff's and defendant's witnesses. She swore that she was Lady Altham's woman, and came over from England

with her in October, 1713, and lived with her till the day of her death. Remembered going down to Dunmaine. Remembered some of the servants; Setwright the housekeeper, Rolph the butler, Antony Dyer; Michael the cook, and his scullery girl, Juggy Landy, who left soon after, and had a child. Hearing some scandal, she was curious to see who this child was like; so asked the coachman's wife to have it brought to the gate, for her to see. She did see it: it was about six weeks old then, and had nothing but a clean blanket. She gave it several things, amongst the rest a fine cambric neckcloth she had brought from England amongst her own things.

Her mistress never had a child, nor any expectation of one. She often confided to the witness her regret, and once, in particular, she came up-stairs, after dinner, crying, and said that brute below (meaning the defendant) had said he wished she might never have a child: and my lady said she wished she might but have a child, to inherit, and she did not care if she was to die the next hour. Was at Ross, with her lady, after the separation, and had no knowledge of Lutwych, a shoemaker. Her lady wore braided shoes, but white damask never, all the time she knew her. No child ever visited her at Ross.

Q. Was there any child brought to my lady as her child ?

A. No, NEVER WAS. SHE HAD NO CHILD: I CAN SAY NO MORE, IF THEY RACK ME TO DEATH.

She swore that McKercher had called at her home in Holborn, and she had said to him, *inter alia*, "Think you if a child had been born to such an estate, they would not have had his birth registered ?"

This witness was violent, and argued the case too much: yet, under cross-examination, she gave, uncon-

sciously, a picture of her fidelity and affection, that made it hard to believe she could be the woman to lie her unhappy lady's son out of his estate, if she believed he was her son. Counsel was cross-examining her, to prove that Lady Altham's memory was impaired long before she died in 1729, in fact when she came from Ross to Dublin.

"Was not she troubled with a dead palsy?"

"I cannot call it a dead palsy, sir."

"Did not that disorder deprive her of the use of her limbs?"

"She lost her limbs by that disorder; but it came by degrees. WHEN SHE CAME FROM ROSS, SHE COULD GO ABOUT, WITH HOLDING BY ONE HAND. WHEN WE FIRST WENT TO LONDON, WITH ONE HAND I COULD LEAD HER ABOUT THE ROOM: AND THEN WITH BOTH HANDS; AND THEN NOT AT ALL. I WAS FORCED TO PUT HER IN A CHAIR, AND WHEEL HER ABOUT. BUT HER MIND WAS CLEAR. SHE KEPT HER OWN ACCOUNTS."

That touching, though incidental, picture of fidelity did not appear to strike the court, but it did Philippa Chester, and she felt sorely staggered, and sick at heart. She was silent this evening, while James and Chester and McKercher discussed the evidence.

Mr. Chester said her evidence was crushing, if true; but her manner was rather against her. "I think you may perhaps get over *her*," said he. "Are there many more?"

"Plenty," said McKercher: "but Heath is the only one I fear. She is an Englishwoman and a Protestant; bad luck to her."

Martin Neif had seen Joan Landy with a child of her own at Dunmaine. Saw the same child afterwards at Dunmaine House. Saw him afterwards, with my lord, at Kinna. Has heard my lord say he would not, for any

money, the boy should know Juggy Landy was his mother.

Arthur Herd was a barber's apprentice, and went out to shave Lord Altham at Carrickduffe. When he had shaved him, Lord Altham said, "Come and live with me; you shall never want a piece of money in your pocket, a gun to shoot with, a horse to ride on, nor a lass to walk with." On this picture of domestic service, he ran away from his indentures without scruple. He found a boy in my lord's house, called Jemmy Annesley. He had a scarlet coat, and a laced hat. Knew my lord to correct him once, and say, "He had the thieving blood of the Landys in him: his grandfather used to steal the cauls out of his sheep, and half thresh his corn, and make the sheaves up."

Witness used to go sometimes and see his friends at Ross. On these occasions Master Annesley would send his duty to his mother; she was then in the service of a baker, at Ross. Since Mr. Annesley's return, had seen him and Mr. McKercher. McKercher asked him who was James Annesley's mother, and he told him it was Joan, or Juggy, Landy. He then reminded Mr. Annesley he had taken several duties from him to his mother, and brought several blessings from his mother to him, and reminded him of a pair of stockings he brought him of his mother's knitting, and Mr. Annesley trembled, and turned pale, at this discourse.

The claimant's case was now considered desperate. He himself seemed like a man awakening from a dream.

Philippa was sick at heart. "Oh!" she moaned, "will these dreadful witnesses never leave off?"

As for McKercher, he disappeared that night.

Philippa went to the court next morning, pale and disturbed; all her alacrity gone. She went like one to execution: yet no entreaties could keep her away: no, she would know the worst.

This day came a new costume, Alderman King in his robes, out of respect for the court. He deposed that Lady Altham lived in his house nine months, as his guest, a little before she left Ireland. She used to converse freely of her affairs, but never mentioned to him that she had a son.

This closed the defendant's evidence.

What now remained but the speeches of counsel, and a verdict for the defendant? Not much, only to conquer the Napoleon of all attorneys living or dead. McKercher reappeared, and claimed, through his counsel, to prove PERJURY on the part of certain witnesses for the defence. The court allowed this, with the usual limitation — he must state his points first, and keep strictly within them.

Claimant's counsel stated four points, and then called, to defeat the *alibi* aforesaid: —

Cæsar Colclough, Esq. He swore that he was at Wexford spring assizes, 1715. Was in court all day at Masterson's trial; did not sit by Lady Altham and Mrs. Giffard; did not believe they were in court; and Parson Doyle was not tried that day, but just one twelvemonth after, and he, Colclough, was a juryman.

On the same line Thomas Higginson, collector of rents, swore Lord Altham went to those very assizes alone, and he called at Dunmaine with money due, and Lady Altham gave to him two glasses of white wine, and at the second he wished her a happy delivery.

Against Mrs. Heath they called an acquaintance of hers, one John Hussy, who swore that when the news of Mr. Annesley coming to claim his rights first reached London from Jamaica, and before the defendant's agents could get to her, she spoke of him to deponent as Lady Altham's son, and a much-wronged man. William Stephens and William Houghton, persons intimate with

Arthur Herd, swore that this formidable witness for the defendant had told quite a different tale to them before the trial. Houghton gave some particulars of gossip. One Mrs. Symons had come into his place, and told him *Herd had turned tail to Mr. Annesley*, and the trial was going against him. "Why, madam," said I, "I heard Arthur Herd express himself that Mr. Annesley was the heir." Pressed for the exact words of Herd, he said, "Upon my oath, and upon my salvation, and upon everything, he said he did believe him to be the true heir of the estate the Earl of Anglesey now possesses." Both deponents swore that a remarkable saying, which was now ringing through every street in Dublin, came first out of Herd's mouth, viz., "Annesley is the right heir if right might take place."

Father John Ryan swore that Father Michael Downes had told him he was to get two hundred pounds for his evidence, and if he made a mistake he must get absolution.

This closed the plaintiff's evidence in reply.

Then came an incident without a parallel. The judges had now before them the greatest mass of perjury ever delivered in Great Britain; and, not being clear on which side the perjury predominated, they took unusual means to test the witnesses. They confronted them on the same table, and took the examination into their own hands. Thus, whereas in an ordinary case there are two battles of evidence, in this immortal trial there were four: and the last deserves a distinct heading.

THE DUELS ON A TABLE.

William Elms, who had said Joan Laffan was a person not to be believed on her oath, was put on the table, and then Joan Laffan was ordered up. When she came on the table, she courtesied, and said, "Your servant, Mr Elms."

The Court. Woman, do you know that gentleman?

Joan. Yes, since I know anybody.

Court. Did you tell him at Dunmaine you were nursing Lady Altham's child?

A. I don't know, my lord; I never saw him to speak to at Dunmaine but once.

Elms. I was high constable, and I spoke to her several times at Dunmaine, when I went to collect the public money. Don't you remember that? Can you deny it?

Joan. I protest I know nothing of it.

The Court. What was the nature of your service?

Joan. I was chambermaid.

Elms. She was laundry-maid.

Joan (ironically). Very well, Mr. Elms.

The Court, having brought them to this issue, looked into the matter, and found, by the evidence of Heath and others, she was chambermaid, and not laundry-maid.

About Joan Landy's cabin, Joan said she only knew it while the child was there. It was then a handsome house, with handsome things in it.

The Court (to Elms). Pray was there any such fine room as she describes?

Elms. I never saw it, WITHOUT IT WAS UNDERGROUND. I saw no furniture at all: there was a wall made up of sods and stones.

Joan Laffan. Oh, fie, Mr. Elms: I wonder you'll say so. — Then she clasped her hands. "BY THE HOLY EVANGELISTS, THERE NEVER WAS A SOD IN THE HOUSE."

They continued again about the coach-road; and this much-abused witness, Laffan, distinctly proved that the respectable Mr. Elms and Rolph had prevaricated about the coach-road; and that it did not go where they said it did, but only to Joan Landy's cabin.

The Court (to Joan Laffan). Was it known by the

neighbors that my lady had a son, and that the child you nursed was that son?

Joan (composedly). MY LORD, IT IS KNOWN BY TWO THOUSAND PEOPLE; AND EVERYBODY KNOWS IT IF THEY WILL PLEASE TO SPEAK TRUTH.

Elms. I NEVER HEARD OF IT, FOR ONE.

The two priests were now put on the table cheek by jowl.

Father Downes denied that he ever rode and conversed with Father Ryan on any Sunday morning; but, on Ryan reminding him of a circumstance, he conceded the riding: but denied that he had ever conversed about this trial on a Sunday morning.

Then the Court made Ryan repeat to his face about the two hundred pounds, etc.

Downes. Does this man swear this?

Court. He does.

Downes. Well, then, I'll tell you, by virtue of my oath — I never was promised a farthing, and IF YOU BELIEVE THIS GENTLEMAN, YOU MAY HANG ME; FOR HE IS A VILE, DRUNKEN, LICENTIOUS DOG IN THE COUNTRY.

The next duel was between John Hussy and Mary Heath. They were put on the table together, and the Court asked Mrs. Heath if Hussy had drank tea with her since the account came from abroad about Mr. Annesley.

Mrs. Heath. Several times.

Court. Had you any conversation with him thereupon?

Mrs. Heath. I have often said to him what a vile thing it was to take away the earl's right — my lady never had a child. And I can't say no more if you rack me to death.

Court. What is Mr. Hussy's character?

Mrs. Heath. I can say no more than that some said

he was a gentleman's servant, and some said he lived by gaming.

The Court. Repeat the words you say she said before you.

Hussy. She told me the Duchess of Buckingham sent for her: and then she said, "Poor gentleman, I'm sorry for him, from my heart, for no one has reason to know his affairs better than I do, for I lived long with Lady Altham, his mother."

Mrs. Heath. BY ALL THAT'S GOOD AND GREAT, I NEVER SAID ANY SUCH WORD. — Then turning on Hussy, "I never thought you were such a man. I've heard people say you were a gamester and lived in an odd way, but I would never believe it till now. I took your part, and always said you behaved like a gentleman."

Hussy. I am a gentleman, and a man of family. Indeed, I heard you say it, and with all the regret and concern imaginable.

Thus ended the greatest conflict of direct and heterogeneous evidence ever known in this country before or since; and, if it does not interest my readers more than the rest of this story, let us have no more of the miserable cant about truth being superior to fiction; for truth has very few pearls to offer comparable to this great trial.

The court adjourned, and Philippa and James Annesley both thanked God it was over, and agreed they would never have gone through it, had they known what they were to endure.

"Sweetheart," said she to him, "I have much need to see you gain your estates; for I have lost my youth. I was so young before this dreadful trial, and now they have made me old. They have shown me mankind too near. What! is it really so, that Christian men and women can stand up side by side, and take the Gospels

of their Redeemer in hand, and one swear black, and t'other white of things they both do know? and all we, looking on amazed, can see nought in either face but truth and honesty? Land and titles, quotha! What are they, that men and women should fling away their souls? Why, if each of these false witnesses were to be Ireland's richest land-owner, and England's highest earl, still 'tis the Devil that hath the best of the bargain. Oh! I am sick, sick. Shall England ever come to this? Then methinks 'twere time for honest men and women to run into the sea, and so to another world for truth."

Having relieved her swelling soul, the noble girl laid her hand on James's shoulder, and said pathetically, "I have but one comfort in this wicked world; that he I love is an honest man."

"Yes, I am an honest man; too honest to trouble you any more, if the jury shall say I am that woman's son."

"O James! what words are these? Think you I care whose son men say you are?"

She made light of it, not knowing at the time the gloomy resolution James had come to.

Yet, after all, now I think of it, she may have had some vague misgiving: for she said to Thomas Chester, almost crying, "Uncle, dear, if it goes against him, you will be very kind to him — for my sake?"

"I will: why should I not? But if you mean, give him my niece and her fortune all the same — why, no; not till he resigns litigation, that is a curse, and takes to some honest trade."

Next day Philippa had a terrible headache; but nothing would keep her out of court.

Four counsel for the defendant spoke in turn: of these Malone was one, and he spoke four hours, with all the zeal and cogency of a great forensic reasoner; often during his speech poor Philippa said, "Oh, will he never

leave off?" and, when he did leave off, the claimant's case seemed prostrate.

Nevertheless, next day, counsellor Marshall, for the plaintiff, spoke one hour only, but with such lucid order, such neatness, cogency, and power of condensation, that he set the claimant's case on its legs again. He was followed by three more.

I shall give one point of the many on which they countered; but I give it only because the judges, by some strange delusion, unaccountable in men so able, actually omitted to say one word upon the point; though to my mind the case lay there.

Prime Sergeant Malone. It is a rule well known, that every case ought to be proved by the best testimony the nature of the thing will admit: and surely this Joan Landy was the very best witness that could have been produced on the side of the plaintiff. It is sworn for her, by others, that she took this child from its mother, and nursed it for fifteen months. Why, then, is she not produced? She is named on their list of witnesses; and the gentlemen on the other side did, very early in the case, promise we should see her. But, by and by, they told us she was a weak woman, and might be put off the thread of her story. But this was plainly not the real reason; the weakest man or woman can speak truth, and will probably on their oath say no other. It is a hardship for a weak mind that knows a fact not to be true, to color it, or make it appear true. Their consciousness that Joan Landy was unwilling or unable to do this, must have been their only reason for not producing her. Good-will to the plaintiff she could not lack; she is, by their account, his wet-nurse; and an Irish nurse, as Mr. McKercher told those who suspected this woman of being something more to the claimant, has a maternal affection, and is willing, *by all honest means*, to promote her nurs-

ling's welfare. Joan Landy knows better than any one whether she has had a son by Lord Altham or not. Yet she is not called: and so, because Joan Landy knew too much about the sham to stand an examination, Joan Laffan, the pretended dry-nurse, is put forward to give Joan Landy's evidence.

Sergeant Marshall (in reply to the above). What we said to the gentlemen was "that Joan Landy had been *tampered with*," and we repeat it. On that account we did not examine her; but we offered her to the gentlemen on the other side, if they pleased to examine her: and they declined. Yet she is their witness. She plays in their case the part Lady Altham plays in ours. Their refusing to examine her is as if we should refuse to examine Lady Altham, were she alive; yet we had Joan Landy in court for them, and they declined her.

The last conflict was over: the three judges summed up. Baron Dawson, flimsily; the Chief Baron and Baron Mountney with great pains, closeness, method, and impartiality, on every point, but the conduct of the counsel in not calling Joan Landy. This, by some strange crook of the Celtic intellect, they all ignored.

The jury retired.

James Annesley waited a few minutes, and then, unable to bear it any longer, cast a look of agony at Philippa, and left the court. McKercher followed him.

Philippa sat in all the tortures of suspense.

While she sat twisting her hands, a line from McKercher was brought her: —

"My dear young lady, keep your eye on him. He has bespoke a passage to Pennsylvania."

She handed it to her uncle, and clasped her hands.

"No," said Thomas Chester, "there is no need for

that. We must think of something. What! the jury come back so soon? Well, they are agreed, then. I was afraid they never would. Better so, my child, than to go through this all again."

"SILENCE!"

Then the usual question was put to the jury, and their foreman delivered A VERDICT FOR THE PLAINTIFF.

There was a loud "huzza" from the crowded court. Ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and Philippa gave a cry, and was carried almost fainting from the court.

She had not been at home many minutes when in rushed her lover, exalted in proportion to his recent despondence, and demanded her hand in marriage that very minute.

What woman, however much in love, could put up with such conduct? She coquetted with her happiness that moment, like any other daughter of Eve. "Marriage! time enough for that." At present she preferred to revel in her lover's triumph, and "not talk nonsense,"—so she said, however. Her lover then informed her that the Irish estates and the title in perspective would not compensate him for what he had endured. McKercher had been fighting for land and honors; but he for her.

Mr. Chester put in his word. "Come, niece, a bargain is a bargain. Prithee, make me not a liar. I ne'er broke faith when I was young, and shall I begin in my old age?"

"I would do much to oblige *you*, uncle," says the young lady, smiling, and coloring high at what she saw coming.

In ran McKercher, boiling over, to say he had arranged bonfires, bells, and torchlight procession.

"The marriage first," said Annesley: "or none of your public shows for me."

Finding him as obstinate as a mule, the pliable

McKercher shifted his helm; got a parson, and distinguished witnesses, all in an hour, and the deed of settlement was produced by Chester, and signed, sealed, and witnessed, and the marriage solemnized in private, as usual among the great, and Matthews rode home, to prepare his house to receive the bride and bridegroom.

At night, McKercher, all in his glory, arranged the torchlight procession, with all the bells a-ringing, and bonfires blazing on the neighboring heights. It was a splendid cavalcade, both of men and women: for the young lord, as they called him now, was the darling of the hour; and all the quality clustered round him. Then James must show his darling Philippa all the places where he had suffered privation and misery.

They made a progress. They went in triumph to Frapper Lane, and other of the places; to Smithfield, where he had held horses; and to Ormond Quay.

One incident occurred worth mentioning. They passed John Purcell's door, and the old man stood in his doorway, to see the show, as all the neighbors did. Annesley caught sight of him, instantly dismounted, and fairly flung his arms round the old man's neck, and kissed him on both cheeks. The old man kissed him, in turn, and sobbed a word or two: but, when James looked for his mammy, he shook his head. She was gone from the joys and troubles of the world: and this is the sorest wound to gentle hearts, that those who have been kindest to us in adversity cannot stay below to share our prosperity.

The crowd huzzaed louder than ever when the young lord kissed the humble, sturdy benefactor of his youth; and then the bright cavalcade resumed its march. They took that sore-tried, but now triumphant, pair, a mile out of Dublin: then they broke into two companies: the larger rode back to drink their healths in Dublin, the

smaller rode with them to Captain Matthews, waving torches, and hurrahing lustily at times. He kept them all, and their horses, that night, with Irish hospitality.

How sweet is pleasure after pain! Such a day as this comes to few, and to the happiest but once in a life: and all the past trouble, mortification, doubt, and suspense made it sweeter still; indeed scarcely credible, it was such rapture.

I could tell more about the "Wandering Heir;" but fiction is not history, and I claim my rights: even the Iliad is but a slice out of Troy's siege: so surely I may take these marvellous passages of an eventful life, then drop the curtain on the doubtful future.

Whether or not he holds his estates, and gets his title from the peers, he has been poor, and now is well-to-do; a slave, and now is free; alone in the world, and now blessed with Philippa; there lies his best chance of enduring happiness, when all is done: for few things in this world keep their high flavor; custom blunts them so: wealth palls by habit; titles cease to ring in sated ears; French dishes pall the appetite in time; power and reputation have no spells against satiety: only pure conjugal love seems never old, nor stale, but ever sweet: if it declines in passion, it gains in affection; it multiplieth joy, it divideth sorrow, and here, in this sorry world, is the thing likest Heaven.

APPENDIX.

THE WANDERING HEIR was first published and registered as a drama 18th December, 1872, to hinder dramatic pirates from stealing the subject in the theatres.

A few days later it appeared, as a story, occupying the whole Christmas number of the *Graphic*.

The sale in Europe was two hundred thousand copies, — the price one shilling.

In the United States Messrs. Harper & Co. sold a hundred and fifty thousand copies in their *Weekly*, and eighty thousand in book form.

Messrs. Rose & Hunter (Toronto), ten thousand in journal, and five thousand in book.

The pirates in America and the Colonies sold about ninety thousand more, as I am informed.

A writer in a leading London journal once told his little public and me that his circulation was *public*, and mine was *private*.

That journal sells about eighty thousand copies — at one-third of the price at which the World took five hundred thousand copies of "The Wandering Heir."

Were criticism ever to be studied scientifically, and were you to ask such a critic how a world-wide success can be achieved by an islander, that scientific person would tell you that it is not a matter of spelling: it does not matter one straw whether the author writes his name S-c-o-t-t, or C-o-l-l-i-n-s, or D-e-f-o-e, or J-o-n-e-s, or C-o-o-p-e-r, or P-o-e: the feat is only to be accomplished by happy choice of a subject, coupled with a good method, and a rare union of different qualities of imagi-

nation, judgment, observation, research, excited brain, self-control, imitation, invention, love of the production, and yet the stern self-denial to prune it, ay, lop it, though it is the author's child.

But certain criticasters, or unscientific critics, have another theory; that no rare gift nor unwonted labor is required; any insular dunce can fire the globe, provided he is dishonest on a large scale.

Now this is a comfortable theory, because, you see, dishonesty is within the reach of all.

Mighty fiction — when its immediate spell has waned, and men close the blessed book that has given them the only keen yet cheap excitement, and the only cheap, ravishing delight this earth affords — oppresses the unimaginative reader with too great a sense of the writer's superiority. The comfortable theory aforesaid relieves him of this oppression, and his elastic vanity springs back with a bound to its throne in his heart.

This foible in mankind smooths the detractor's path to the public conscience. To pander to the vanity, and — sure concomitant of vanity — the ingratitude, of an author's readers, is as easy as it is hard to write a big, short story; and this is why some public detractor always barks after a masterpiece, and curs innumerable echo the ululation.

But it may be worth while to show the more enlightened part of the public by what shallow arts they are duped into undervaluing the great and difficult art of swift and fiery fiction, and who are the people that play this game under cover of the anonymous, — that unhappy system, which is the curse and the degradation of letters in England, and yet is thoroughly un-English, being opposed, as any lawyer will tell you, to the spirit of all our wise institutions.

Upon the same day, viz., the 4th January, 1872, there appeared two pseudonymous letters, one in a weekly called the *Press and the St. James's Chronicle* — this letter was signed "Cœcilius," — the other in the *Athenæum*, signed "C. F."

Both these pseudonymuncula described "The Wandering Heir" as a mere plagiarism from Swift: both advanced, by way of proof, a single passage of the story, and certain well-known lines of Swift. Both writers, to make the reader think

I had borrowed very servilely from Swift, had recourse to the same artifice; they both suppressed all Swift's lines that had no counterpart in my narrative; and suppressed all the lines in my narrative that took nothing from Swift. This, of course, disturbed the true proportions of the alleged plagiarism.

But one swallow does not make summer, nor one parallel passage, adroitly tampered with, make an entire story a plagiarism from Swift; so both these pseudonymuncula told one stale, but alas! always successful, falsehood. They both gave the public to understand that the selected passage was *not an exception, but a sample, the whole work being borrowed from* Swift. This fraud is called the "Sham-Sample Swindle."

Moreover, each of these correspondents showed singular malice. "Cœcilius," not content with libelling a single work of mine, went into excessive personalities; he deliberately wrote, and printed, that I was a person "who might write novels if I had but imagination, and could write English." He also described me as "an illiterate scribbler." Now this was the language of extraordinary malice, not of ordinary veracity. There was an unusual and unprecedented stroke of malice in "C. F.'s" letter. He accused me of a fraud in business.

PROSE AND VERSE.

Mr. Charles Reade has written a novel in the *Graphic* newspaper. It was accidentally brought to my house at Christmas, and, looking at a page of it, I was reminded of Dean Swift's "Journal of a Modern Lady." Mr. Charles Reade writes: —

"Down they sat, and soon their eyes were gleaming, and their flesh trembling with excitement. Mrs. Anne Gregory held bad cards; she had to pawn ring after ring — for these ladies, being well acquainted with each other, never played on parole — and she kept bemoaning her bad luck — 'Betty, I knew how 'twould be. The parson called to-day. This odious chair, why will you stick me in it? Stand further, girl. I always lose when you look on.' Mrs. Betty tossed her head and went behind another lady. Miss Gregory still lost, and had to pawn her snuff-box to Lady Dace. She consoled herself by an insinuation: 'My lady, you touched your wedding-ring. That was a sign to your partner here.' — 'Nay, madam, 'twas but a sign my finger itched. But if you go to that, you spoke a word began with H. Then she knew you had

the king of hearts.' — 'That is like miss here," said another matron. 'She rubs her chair when she hath a matadore in hand.' — 'Set a thief to catch a thief, madam,' was miss's ingenious and polished reply. — 'Hey-dey,' cries one. — 'Here's spadillo got a mark on the back : a child might know it in the dark. Mistress Pigot, I wish you'd be pleased to pare your nails.' . . . It was four o'clock before they broke up, huddled on their cloaks and hoods, and their chairs took them home with cold feet and aching heads."

The Dean writes: —

"With panting heart and earnest eyes,
In hope to see *Spadillo* rise;
In vain, alas! her hope is fled;
She draws an ace, and sees it red.
In ready counters never pays,
But pawns her snuff-box, rings, and keys;
Ever with some new fancy struck,
Tries twenty charms to mend her luck.
'This morning when the parson came
I said I should not win a game.
This odious chair, how came I stuck in't?
I think I never had good luck in't.
. . . . . .
Stand further, girl, or get you gone;
I always lose when you look on.
. . . . . .
I saw you touch your wedding ring
Before my lady called a king:
You spoke a word began with H,
And I know whom you meant to teach,
Because you held the king of hearts;
Fie, madam, leave these little arts.'
'That's not so bad as one that rubs
Her chair to call the king of clubs,
And makes her partner understand
A matadore is in her hand.
. . . . . .
Spadillo here has got a mark;
A child may know it in the dark;

I guess the hand; it seldom fails;
I wish some folks would pare their nails.'
. . . . . .

At last they hear the watchman knock,
'A frosty morn — past four o'clock.'
The chairmen are not to be found.
'Come, let us play the other round.'
Now all in haste they huddle on
Their hoods and cloaks and get them gone."

Again Mr. Reade: —

"At twelve next day Miss Gregory was prematurely disturbed by her lap-dog, barking like a demon for his breakfast. She stretched, gaped, unglued her eyes, and rang for Betty. . . . 'Here, child. Let in some light. Nay, not so much: would'st blind me? I'm dead of the vapors. Get me a dram of citron-water. So. Now bring me a looking-glass. I will lie abed. Alack! I look frightfully to-day. If ever I touch a card again! Didst ever see such luck as mine? Four matadores, and lose codille!"

Again the Dean: —

"The modern dame is wak'd by noon.

. . . . . .

She stretches, gapes, unglues her eyes,
And asks if it be time to rise;
Of headache and the spleen complains;
And then to cool her brains,
Her nightgown and her slippers brought her,
Takes a large dram of citron-water.
Then to her glass; and, 'Betty, pray,
Don't I look frightfully to-day?
But was it not confounded hard?
Well, if I ever touch a card!
Four matadores and lose codille."

Again Mr. Reade: —

"Miss Gregory was at her glass when Betty returned with the tea. 'Madam,' said she, with a sly sneer, 'the goldsmith waits below, to know if you'll redeem the silver cup.' — 'There, give him that for interest.' — 'And my Lady Dace has sent her maid.' — 'That is for her winnings. Never was such a dun. Here, take these ten pistoles my lord left for the wine-merchant. They are all light, thank heaven!"

Again the Dean:—

"Madam, the goldsmith waits below;
He says, his business is to know
If you'll redeem the silver cup
He keeps in pawn? — 'Why, show him up.'
Your dressing-plate he'll be content
To take, for interest, *cent. per cent.*
And, madam, there's my Lady Spade
Hath sent this letter by her maid.
'Well, I remember what she won;
And hath she sent so soon to dun?
Here, carry down those ten pistoles
My husband left to pay for coals:
I thank my stars they all are light."

Again Mr. Reade:—

". . . A mercer with silks, patterns and laces from Paris: so the toilet was not complete at four, when a footman knocked at the door with, 'Madam, dinner stays.' — 'Then the cook must keep it back, I never can have time to dress; and I am sure no living woman takes less.'"

Again the Dean:—

"Now to another scene give place,
Enter the folks with silks and lace;
Fresh matter for a world of chat,
Right Indian this, right Mechlin that:
'Observe this pattern; there's a stuff;
. . . . . .
This business of importance o'er,
And madam almost dressed by four,
The footman, in his usual phrase,
Comes up with 'Madam, dinner stays.'
She answers in her usual style,
'The cook must keep it back a while:
I never can have time to dress;
No woman breathing takes up less.'"

I have read little of Mr. Reade's story beyond what I have quoted. There may be more stuff of the same sort in it, as Mr. Reade makes a slight reference to "Swift's Polite Conversation."

If this is how novels are made, surely novel-writing must be an easy art! Vulgar rumor says that Mr. Reade was paid for this at the rate of a penny a word! Who is to receive the pence for that part of the work which clearly belongs to Dean Swift? Was the great writer ever paid so well? C. F.

I saw one hand in the two letters, and thought them an abuse of the anonymous. I think so still. If they are not, why, then, the anonymous is a worse thing than even I consider it.

I addressed a letter of remonstrance to Sir Charles Dilke, because he is the proprietor of the *Athenœum*, and proposed to him, as a matter of fair play, to give my letter the same circulation he had given to the letter of "C. F."

Sir Charles Dilke objected, privately, to this course, on the ground that he was not the editor of the *Athenœum*. He said he had been much amused by my letter, but had erased his name from it, and returned it to the editor, as it was evidently meant not for an individual, but for the journal. He expressed no regret.

To this I replied, in effect, that if he was an individual, so was I, and it was not my shadow his servants had attacked, but me. His weekly was sold for his benefit, as much as my story for mine. Slander of a meritorious author was a spicy and salable article, and he was responsible to those he injured unfairly by the sale of spice. He had no excuse for evading that responsibility in my case, since I had treated him, in my letter, with proper courtesy. — "P. S. I am sorry my letter has amused you; sorry for your sake. Young gentlemen should endeavor not to be amused, when their lackeys have thrown dirt upon their seniors."

However, the question between Sir Charles Dilke and me is very debatable. No blame attaches to him for the course he took, nor yet to me for mine. But I think the matter may be fairly disposed of by inquiring what says the law of the land to a man unfairly bitten by an anonymous or pseudonymous polecat?

Why, it says, "Don't you be so simple as to go fighting with shadows, or marching, with manly breast, up to masked

batteries manned by anonymuncula, pseudonymuncula, and skuncula; collar some *man*. Sue him, or indict him by his Christian name and his surname. As to the Anonymuncula, or Pseudonymuncula, or Skuncula, who wrote the libel, the *law will lend you no assistance to discover them* — as it would to detect other offenders — because you have a remedy against the vendor of the libel."

Very well; I took the law for my guide; only I did not sue the vendor. I thought an earnest but temperate remonstrance quite enough in a case where the vendor was above suspicion of personal malice or trade malice.

My letter was refused admission to the *Athenæum*, upon these terms. Yet, would you believe it, Mr. McColl, the *soi-disant* editor of the *Athenæum*, commented upon it, and told his readers this letter which he suppressed "was about my plagiar*isms* from Swift."

I published my letter to Sir Charles Dilke in *Once a Week*.

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

SIR — The above literary fraud was first exposed and named in your pages — No. 34, New Series, August 22, 1868. I shall feel obliged if you will strike it another blow, by inserting a letter that has been suppressed, yet misrepresented, in the *Athenæum*, Jan. 18: —

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

SIR CHARLES DILKE — The above fraud is worked as follows: — The detractor takes an exceptional passage from a meritorious work, cites it in full, and then slyly suggests that the whole work is of that character. This fraud can never fail to deceive, because the little bit of truth is presented to the senses, the enormous lie is hidden from them. Having exposed, dissected, branded, and, above all, named this fraud, I hoped I had done with it; but I find I had only scotched the reptile: it is at me again in the *Athenæum*, Jan. 4, and this time with defamatory suggestions, which compel me either to sue you for libel, or to test your character as a gentleman by an appeal to your honor and humanity. I take the latter course.

A pseudonymuncule, said to be in the pay of your weekly, pre

tends that he is an outside correspondent, and his initials are "C. F."; and he alleges that he has got a house, and that the "Wandering Heir" was brought to it — by the wind, or by some one who said, "Slander me now this tale"? — and that he opened this tale at random, and, being familiar with Swift, fell at once on a passage he recognized as adapted from verses by Swift; and — being not familiar with Swift — is convinced the whole story, or the bulk of it, is adapted from the same source, and any fool could write it, which implies he could write it himself, and so places me at the bottom of the human intellect.

One would think that this was enough. Yet he proceeds to indelicacy, and from that to libel. He undertakes to say, without giving his authority — some printer's devil probably — that I am paid for this tale by the line, or by the word, or in some form that makes every word I have taken from Swift a commercial injustice to my publishers.

Now, sir, I am an old gentleman, honorably connected with letters; you are a young gentleman, honorably connected with letters. A pseudonymuncule has not a character to lose, nor a name that can be lowered; but you and I have both. It is to you, therefore, I must appeal to reconsider this insult. In all my long experience, nothing so utterly snobbish, as the above insinuation, has ever been published about an author and a gentleman in a respectable weekly. What! is a writer, who would not be admitted to my kitchen, far less to my confidence, to be allowed to tell the public, in your columns, that he knows, or thinks he knows, how I treat with my publishers, and to found on that indelicate conjecture a lie, which is a libel?

I feel sure that on reflection you will be sorry anything so unworthy of you has crept — perhaps in your absence — into the weekly of which you are the proprietor, vendor, and editor; and, as I shall expect some expressions of gentleman-like regret from you, I hereby give you the material. Writers of my stamp are not paid, like pseudonymuncula, by the line: my contract with the proprietors of the *Graphic* was for a fixed sum; but the bulk was not determined. Of course there was a minimum fixed; but they were liberal on their side, and I, who am an artist, and not a mere trader, gave them *nine columns over the minimum.*

My literal use of Swift, honestly examined, is about twenty lines. What becomes of the charge that I take money for every word, and sell Swift's words for Reade's?

You will, I am sure, withdraw this insinuation. The writer has little personal claim on you; for observe, if he is "C.F." in

the *Athenæum*, January 4, he is "Cœcilius" in the *Press*, January 4, and a scurrilous trickster in both. I send you his article in the *Press*, that you may see from how unscrupulous a mind comes that libel in your own columns, which I hope you will now disapprove; and, in that hope, I proceed to correct the mere intellectual detraction with good temper. It is founded on two things — 1. The sham-sample swindle, which I have defined. 2. On a pardonable blunder.

The blunder is one into which many criticasters of my day have fallen; but a critic is more scientific, more discriminating. The scientific critic knows there is a vital distinction between taking ideas from a homogeneous source, and from a heterogeneous source; and that only the first mentioned of these two acts is plagiarism: the latter is more like jewel-setting. Call it what you like, it is not plagiarism.

I will take the fraud and the blunder in order, and illustrate them by a few examples, out of thousands.

By the identical process pseudonymuncule has used to entrap your readers into believing "The Wandering Heir" a mere plagiarism from Swift, one could juggle those who read quotations, not books, into believing: —

1. That the Old Testament is *full* of indelicacy.

2. That the miracles of Jesus Christ are none of them the miracles of a God, nor even of a benevolent man: — giving water intoxicating qualities, when the guests had drunk enough, goodness knows; cursing a fig-tree; driving pigs to a watery grave. This is how Voltaire works the sham-sample swindle, and gulls Frenchmen that let him read the Bible for them.

3. That Virgil never wrote a line he did not take from Lucretius, or somebody.

4. That Milton the poet is *all* Homer, Euripides, and an Italian play called "Adam in Paradise."

5. That Molière is all Plautus and Cyran de Bergerac; "en prend *tout* son bien où il le trouve."

6. That the same Molière never writes grammatical French.

7. That Shakspeare is *all* Plautus, Horace, Hollingshed, Belleforest, and others.

8. That Corneille had not an idea he did not steal from Spain.

9. That Scott has not an original incident in all his works.

10. That five Italian operas are all English and Irish music.

11. That the overture to "Guillaume Tell" is all composed by Swiss shepherds.

12. That "Robinson Crusoe" is a mere theft from Woodes Rogers and Dampier.

Not one of these is a greater lie, and few of them are as great lies, as to call "The Wandering Heir" a plagiarism from Swift.

Now for the blunder. That will be best corrected by putting examples of jewel-setting, and examples of plagiarism, cheek by jowl.

Corneille's "Horaces," a tragedy founded on a heterogeneous work — viz., an historical narrative by Livy — is not plagiarism. His "Cid," taken from a Spanish play, is plagiarism. Shakspeare's "Comedy of Errors," and Molière's "Avare," are plagiarisms, both from Plautus. Shakspeare's "Macbeth," taken from a heterogeneous work, a chronicle, is no plagiarism, though he uses a much larger slice of Hollingshed's dialogue than I have taken from Swift, and follows his original more closely. The same applies to his "Coriolanus." This tragedy is not a plagiarism; for Plutarch's life of Coriolanus is a heterogeneous work; and the art with which the great master uses and versifies Volumnia's speech, as he got it from North's translation of Plutarch, is jewel-setting, not plagiarism. By the same rule, "Robinson Crusoe," though Defoe sticks close to Woodes Rogers and Dampier, in many particulars of incident and reflection, is not a plagiarism, being romance founded on books of fact. The distinction holds good as to single incidents, or short and telling speeches. Scott's works are literally crammed with diamonds of incident and rubies of dialogue, culled from heterogeneous works, histories, chronicles, ballads, and oral traditions. But this is not plagiarism — it is jewel-setting. Byron's famous line, —

"The graves of those who cannot die,"

is a plagiarism from another poet, Crabbe; but Wolsey's famous distich, in Shakspeare's "Henry the Eighth," is not a plagiarism from Wolsey: it is an historical jewel set in a heterogeneous work, and set as none but a great inventor ever yet set a fact-jewel.

And, to compare small things with great — since Science is never so great, so just, so scientific, as when she applies her equal laws to things identical in kind, though differing in degree — Swift's verses are not fictitious narrative, but a photograph, painting the inner life of many Dublin ladies at an epoch long gone by; and I — desirous, as an artist, to give touches of true color to my invention — did well to set that jewel in my *heterogeneous work*, and therein was not a plagiarist, but followed the highest and noblest masters of fiction in a distinct branch of their art.

Fiction is not lying; or pseudonymuncula would really find it as easy as they pretend. Let any man look into fiction scientifically, for a change, and he will find all fiction worth a button is founded on fact; and it matters less than the unscientific suppose, whether those facts are gathered by personal experience, or by hearsay, or from the experience of others as recorded in manuscripts or printed records of fact. I have used one of Swift's experiences of real life; but please observe under what circumstances; the inner life of Irish people in 1726–40 is a matter so inaccessible and recondite, that Macaulay was in open despair over it; and, unfortunately for me, Froude's researches were not yet public. When I write of my own day, I have three great resources — experience, memory, and print; but, in writing "The Wandering Heir," I had but one source. Then, either I must do as the sham novelists do, drift into reckless blundering, and present for the eighteenth century the nineteenth century daubed with "Foregad!" and "Pshaw!" or I must take the scholar's way, and labor hard, grope as only scholars can, and put my labor to some profit. I took the scholar's way; I ransacked Dublin for old records; I raked out things even Macaulay missed; I gemmed my tale with many a recondite jewel of fact, and I used *one solitary passage* from so common a writer as Swift; but then that passage was a gem. I used it without disguise. I positively invited my readers to read Swift. The invitation was noticed in the *Athenæum* of December 27; and, shuffling apart, it was that very invitation sent the pseudonymuncule to Swift. December 27, I was accused in the *Athenæum* of showing off my learning; and January 4, of disguising it.

Some things, sir, can never be judged without their alternatives. Suppose I had not used that photograph of an Irish lady's life, what trash should I have written out of the depths of my inner consciousness? It was Swift or lies; for that phase of Irish life he photographs has left no other trace. No, sir, to set this unique jewel of truth in my heterogeneous work was no crime, intellectual or moral. My only crime is this: I have written too well. Invention, labor, research, and, above all, a close condensation, to be found in few other living English novelists, all these qualities combined have produced a strong, yet finite, story, which has fallen like a little thunderbolt among the "contes à dormir debout".of garrulous mediocrity. This is the crime that has made pseudonymuncule writhe with envy, and so boil with rage, that your weekly did not suffice to his hot hate; he must insult me, *on the same day*, in a weakly (*sic*) that is dying for a kick from me, and will have

to die without that honor. My real crime, I say, is indicated in certain lines from the *Times* newspaper, which deserve immortality. Please rescue them from unjust oblivion: —

"There is no vice of which a man can be guilty, no shabbiness, no wickedness, which excites so much indignation amongst his contemporaries, as his success. This is the unpardonable crime which reason cannot defend, nor humility mitigate.

> "'When Heaven with such parts has blest him,
> Have I not reason to detest him?'

is a genuine and natural expression of the vulgar mind. The man who labors as we cannot labor, speaks as we cannot speak, writes as we cannot write, and thrives as we cannot thrive, has accumulated in his own person all the offences of which a man can be guilty. Down with him! why cumbereth he the ground?" — *The Times.*

I am, sir — with thanks for your courtesy and politeness in inserting so long a letter — your faithful servant,

CHARLES READE.

Next week the howls of the *Athenæum* showed me I had hit the bull's-eye, and the law was wise in telling us to leave the shadows of skunks alone, and collar substantial men.

"C. F." replied to this letter, and rather smartly.

MR. READE'S PLAGIAR*ISMS.* (*sic.*)

JANUARY 25, 1873.

I must beg you to give me a little space to defend myself from an attack made upon me by Mr. Charles Reade, in a contemporary periodical. My letter to you of January 4th, on Mr. Reade's plagiarism of Dean Swift, has drawn from Mr. Reade some rather curious language; and to show how inappropriate that language is, I must give some description of myself. I am a quiet woman living in a country village, which I scarcely ever leave I have never written for the press, nor done any literary work whatsoever, therefore I need hardly add I have never received money for anything written. I am quite unknown to the world. I seldom look at a newspaper, or read modern literature. I did not even know, until yesterday, of the present existence of that periodical in which Mr. Reade reviles me.

Mr. Reade calls me "a trickster, a scurrilous skunk, a pseudonymuncule;" and, moreover, says he would not admit me to his

kitchen; and that I have told "a lie, which is a libel;" also that I am in the pay of the *Athenæum;* also that what I wrote concerning his plagiarism was "snobbish," whereas, he says his own crime is that he has "written too well." I, a woman, entirely unknown, find myself becoming famous when a great (?) novelist takes the trouble to answer my letter and call me a *scurrilous skunk*. As to the hybrid word *pseudonymuncule*, I suppose it means a little writer under a false name: I can only say that I am not a writer, as the word is understood, and that C. F. are really the initial letters of my name. You are at liberty to give Mr. Reade my name and address, if he requires them, and if you think that his great anger will not bring him down to our quiet village to frighten a poor lady.

Mr. Reade defends himself by saying that Virgil, Milton, Molière, Shakspeare, Corneille, Scott, Defoe, all plagiarized, but he forgets that they improved what they used, whereas Mr. Reade merely converts good poetry of Swift's into very commonplace prose. There is in the *Anti-Jacobin*, page 86, January 22d, 1798, a note (probably by Canning) on the expression "kidnapp'd rhimes;" kidnapp'd implies something more than *stolen*. It is, according to an expression of Mr. Sheridan's (in the *Critic*), '*using other people's thoughts as Gipsies do stolen children — disfiguring them to make them pass for their own.*' This is a serious charge against an author, and ought to be well supported." The italics are in the original. In my letter of January 4th I did thoroughly support the charge I made.

Mr. Reade styles himself, "*an old gentleman, honorably connected with letters.*" I am a young woman not connected with letters beyond the enjoyment and entertainment afforded me by books; but I think I may modestly say to Mr. Reade, in the words of the title of one of his novels, "It is never too late to mend."

C. F.

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

SIR — "C. F." writes at me in the *Athenæum:* says she is a woman, and I have attacked her. Not exactly. It was she who attacked me: played off the sham-sample swindle — to which, by-the-by, she still clings — by asserting that a solitary and exceptional passage was the rule of my story; and had the vulgarity to tell the public I was paid by the word, and so had done an unfair thing to my publishers.

Now, if to all this she had added that she was a woman, I should only have said, "You had better in future consult with some man, worthy of the name, before you write about authors and gentlemen."

I now withdraw every opprobrious epithet I heaped in error on this soft, gentle, modest, kindly, womanly creature; and she will understand my letter thus. If a man had written her first letter, he would have been a snob, and a calumniator. If a man had written her second letter after reading mine, he would be an incurable liar, and shuffler. But, as it is only a woman who has written both, — why, it is only a woman.

I observe the sub-editor of the *Athenæum* writes at me in his weekly, though he suppressed the letter he comments on.

He played the same game when I defended Mr. Tom Taylor against unfair detraction in his columns.

Is this gentleman a woman, too? To cut all this shuffling short, Sir Charles Dilke displaced Mr. Hepworth Dixon as the editor of the *Athenæum*, in order to control it himself. This is notorious. It is equally so that he does exercise a certain control at this time. He is also the proprietor and vendor; he is the person responsible to the law, and is therefore fairly open to such a letter as mine, which treated him with courtesy, and appealed to his better feelings — and, I think, not in vain. Time will show.

Yours truly, CHARLES READE.

FEBRUARY 1.

I beg to add here that, in point of fact, I did not apply those opprobrious terms to "C. F.," but to some individual unknown, whom I accused of writing not only the letter of "C. F.," but also the letter of "Cœcilius," in another weekly. See my letter in proof of this.

When you have admired "C. F.'s" wit at my expense, please observe that she makes the public believe "C. F." is a clew to her whole name; so she is not a pseudonymuncule — that she is out of the reach of literary envy, is a quiet outsider, reading old authors, and not *troubling her head with modern productions, and has no other reason for concealing her address from me* than the fear that I should go and play the ruffian in her village.

Mr. McColl co-operated with his correspondent by declaring that the letter in the *Press* was not written by the person who had written the letter in the *Athenæum;* and concealing *that both letters came out of the same house and the same mind.*

Thus this veracious, candid pair conveyed to their readers that two pure-minded, independent critics had condemned me fairly on the same day: a coincidence, which, if true, was discreditable to me, and to nobody else.

There the correspondence ceased, leaving "C. F." and McColl masters of the field, and Reade a hot-headed, wrong-headed writer, who suspects collusion and trade-malice in fair, impartial, disconnected critics.

So much for the veracity of pseudonymuncula and the candor of a McColl. Now for the truth.

"Cœcilius" and "C. F." live together in the country. They planned the two letters together, and issued them under different signatures, and made the public believe that I had been guilty of wholesale fraud, and that two patterns of honesty had detected it, each without assistance from the other.

Now if this lady and gentleman had done the right thing, and signed their names to their letters, I should have treated them with due respect, and should never have applied those bitter terms of invective to them, which figured in my letter to Sir Charles Dilke; and since I do know them now, I lay aside vituperative terms and confine myself to hard facts.

Who and what is "Cœcilius"? He is my rival in business and in nothing else. He is a novelist. He is prolific, but not popular. His surname has a great and merited reputation; but it has never been able to drag his Christian name after it up the steps of "the Temple of Fame."

Now my Christian name keeps up with my surname. Disgusting!

But that is not all. "Cœcilius" used to write for the *Graphic;* but towards the end of 1872 that market was closed to his prolific, but not popular, pen.

The novelist, fertile in failures, to whom the *Graphic* was closed for a time, sees another novelist write a story in the said *Graphic*, and learns the *Graphic* has sold a vast number of copies. Thereupon he and his wife sit down, and multiply malice. Under cover of the pseudonymous they write and publish not one, but two spiteful, scurrilous letters, denouncing their successful rival as a dunce and a cheat, which letters they were ashamed to sign their names to; yet they attack their

brother novelist by name, and pretend *their only* reason for withholding their own name is — that the injured person is a ruffian; a man likely to come and make a brawl in their village.

Now neither "Cœcilius" nor his wife can have any personal malice against me. It is an example of trade-malice on the lower level; and that deep degrader of the literary character, which makes men down into women, and women into adders, that constant temptation, that steady corrupter of the conscience, and curse of the soul, anonymous criticism of rival by rival, is even more to blame than the unsuccessful novelist, and his wife, whom that anonymous system tempted to palm themselves off as critics, and, in that disguise, pull down their intellectual and moral superior — because he was their rival in trade.

Another example — Mr. Trollope wrote an admirable novel called "Ralph the Heir." Everybody praised it, more or less; and nobody found a moral flaw in it; for there was none to be found. I saw gems in it that ought not be lost to the British stage, so barren of English life, English characters, and English idioms. I dramatized and produced it. Trollope, condensed by Reade, succeeded with the public by a law of art, which is as inevitable as the law of gravity. The independent critics, being gentlemen who are steeped to the throat in French mediocrity, and newspaper dialogue with sentences a mile long, such as man never yet *spake*, did not relish it as the public did; but they were civil, and honest in their strictures, and the most adverse found no moral flaw in the production.

Yet four or five newspapers published a wicked and criminal calumny, which, if I had been as vindictive as my foes, would have ended in several indictments at the Old Bailey. They said the play was indecent. The writers of these libels all flattered the actors, and even praised, *at my expense*, a couple of promising novices.

In their criminal mendacity, and hatred of the author, coupled with their lickspittle adulation of inexperienced actors, my experienced eye saw at once a little clique of well-known

public traitors, bad playwrights, disguised as critics, and conspiring in trade-malice. I said so in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*. The then editor of that paper, though a good friend of mine, did not believe me. Indeed, he corrected me severely; and so, as usual, poor Mr. Reade was hot-headed, wrong-headed, etc., until the thing came to be *sifted* in a court of law (Reade *vs.* the Licensed Victuallers); and then it came out that what I had stated was the exact truth; the play was so pure that Mr. Justice Brett, who read every line, declared he could not find a sentence with any flavor of indecency in it; and the libels originated with a clique of playwrights, disguised as critics, whose habits are notorious; they consort in low clubs and sometimes in public-houses, where the conversation teaches the art of naughty interpretation and distortion of honest words. They publicly demand of the Licenser the most immoral French plays; they praise "*Nos Intimes*," which is a singularly indecent play. They truckle to the actors, and praise each other's farces, stolen from the French, and fly like hornets at every outsider who writes a good play. — TRADE-MALICE.

In Reade *vs.* Licensed Victuallers, Mr. Richard Lee, a vile playwright, who, in the disguise of a critic, wrote the malicious calumny for which a jury gave me two hundred pounds damages, swore in the witness-box that he had no personal malice against me, and hardly knew me by sight. He swore the honest truth: he had no personal malice whatever. I also swore the truth, viz., that he and his fellows acted from trade-malice; and, what I swore then upon the Gospels of my Redeemer, I now repeat upon my honor as a gentleman. These calumnies all arise out of trade-malice.

And therefore I earnestly implore the proprietors and editors of respectable journals to profit by these two flagrant exposures of a public abuse, which we all know is being perpetrated on a gigantic scale; and not to allow any playwright to criticise his pals and his rivals *without signing his name*, nor any novelist to criticise his rivals *without signing his name*. There will be nothing new in this; on other subjects, all respectable editors take due precautions to keep their columns incorrupt. But why cleanse four columns in a page,

and let the fifth be a sink of venality and spite? At present, in some respectable and leading journals, the dramatic column is quite behind the Press and its habits: it is a secret instrument of blackmail, and an openly smoking dunghill of venality, trade-malice, and trade-collusion; all which the editors can stop forever in a single day, if they care to confer a benefit on their country, and rescue one of the noblest branches of literature, criticism, from the deep degradation into which it is descending.

By the same rule, if a bad novelist wants to write an anonymous letter, and blacken a good novelist, let him send it by post to the author's house, as so many cowards do. But no respectable editor should print what comes from so suspicious a quarter, with a request that the writer's name may be concealed from the rival he vilifies.

You have heard calumny call itself criticism. Now hear criticism. It is a great rarity, and worth hearing.

"The Wandering Heir" owes nothing to any preceding figment, and so there is no plagiarism in it. But it is written upon the method I have never disowned, and never shall. On that method — viz., the interweaving of imaginary circumstances with facts gathered impartially from experience, hearsay, and printed records — my most approved works, "It is Never too Late to Mend," "Hard Cash," "The Cloister and the Hearth," etc., have been written, and that openly. My preface to "Hard Cash" contains these words: —

"Hard Cash," like "The Cloister and the Hearth," is a matter-of-fact romance; that is, a fiction built on truths; and these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic labor, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people, whom I have sought out, examined, and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle.

The madhouse scenes have been picked out by certain disinterested gentlemen who keep private asylums, and periodicals to puff them; and have been met with bold denials of public facts and with timid personalities, and a little easy cant about sensation[1]

[1] This slang term is not quite accurate as applied to me. Without sensation there can be no interest: but my plan is to mix a little character and a little philosophy with the sensational element.

novelists; but in reality those passages have been written on the same system as the nautical, legal, and other scenes; the best evidence has been ransacked; and a large portion of this evidence I shall be happy to show at my house to any brother writer who is disinterested, and really cares enough for truth and humanity to walk or ride a mile in pursuit of them.

In the present case I will go a little farther, and enable the curious reader to trace my footsteps in many places of this story if he likes; and I not only invite, but even presume to advise, young writers to look closely into my work, and into that method to which I owe so much. It is a method, by adopting which, and laboring hard in it, as I do, many a young novelist might double his value.

The first strata of facts I had to build my figment on were two reported trials; in one James Annesley was defendant, on a charge of murder; in the other (Craig *vs.* Anglesey), he was virtually the plaintiff in a trial at bar, for great estates and titles. You will find the first case in "Howell's Collection of State Trials." The second, Craig *vs.* Anglesey, is badly reported in Howell. I used the folio report, published by Smith & Bradley, Dublin, 1744. This book shall be deposited with my publishers, that any novelist, or critic, who likes, may see the use I have made of it.

The next source of fact was the "Memoirs of an Unfortunate Nobleman," written by James Annesley's attorney. Upon the whole it is a tissue of falsehoods; but there are a few invaluable truths in it. The lies declare themselves trumpet-tongued; the truths are confined to James Annesley's adventures whilst he was a slave in the colonies, and his return home with Admiral Vernon. I used a few of the truths, and shunned all the falsehoods. The "Memoirs," being rather a rare book, shall be deposited with my publishers, for inspection.

In the three books I have now named lies half a plot. But only *invention, of equal power with the facts*, could make it a whole plot. Therefore I invented Philippa, and all her business, and the whole sexual interest of the story.

I tell you this union of fact and imagination is a kind of intellectual copulation, and has procreated the best fiction in every age, by a law of nature.

To go into smaller details, the Irish schoolmaster and his "tall talk" are from facts supplied in print by Carleton.

The Irish curses I have used are culled, with great study, from three authors, Carleton, Banim, and Griffin, and selected from an incredible number.

The decayed Irish gentlemen, "the scornful dog who eats dirty puddings," is fact, taken from "A Tour in Ireland," published 1740, to be found in the British Museum.

The country costumes, the price of salmon, and other particulars, are taken from the "Post-chaise Companion in Ireland," and "Twiss's Tour in Ireland." The great salmon leap from "Twiss's Tour in Ireland." The turf backgammon board, with a boy for dice, from oral tradition — it was told me forty years ago, by an Irish gentleman, who had it from his father.

The incomparable speech, "Arrah people, people," etc., I had entire from the mouth of an Irishman, who heard it actually delivered in a fair.

The abductions, and sham abductions, of Irish girls, from "Ireland Sixty Years Ago," and Sir J. Lubbock's "Origin of Civilization," etc.

In the other Hiberniana of the story I have used the various histories of Dublin, and Cork, by Gilbert and others, the *European Magazine*, the "Post-chaise Companion in Ireland," "Letters from a Gentleman in Ireland to a Gentleman in Bath," rather an uncommon book; and a very rare collection of old Irish journals I obtained by groping that city for them.

The charming series of incidents, in which John Purcell figures, are from his sworn evidence, and almost verbatim. The abduction of the heir in open daylight is also sworn evidence. See Craig *vs.* Anglesey.

The uncle beating his niece, her flight to foreign parts, and his apprehension on a charge of murder, is a recorded fact. I got it out of a chap-book; but it has been referred to by jurists in my own day, and I also possess in a ballad called the "New West Country Garland." James Annesley's adventure with Christina McCarthy, her sham penitence, her cajolery, and attempt to poison him, were told by James Annesley to his attorney, and printed by him in "The Memoirs;" and I

have set that gem of female nature in my story. The discovery of James, on board Admiral Vernon's ship, by his old schoolfellow Matthews, rests on the same basis of recorded fact. The curious advertisement by Jeweller Drummond is an actual advertisement of the day, taken verbatim from the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Banker Drummond's ancestor inserted it.

Elizabeth Shipley's character and her remarkable dream about Wilmington — this and other Wilmingtonia are condensed from Ferris's "History of the Original Settlements on the Delaware," and from Barker's "History of the Primitive Settlements."

But whatever, in that part of the story, bears upon the flagellation and other punishments of men and women, and the legal relation of the planters to their white servants, has been taken direct, with careful study and precision, from the various "Charters and Acts of Assembly" of each separate State, at, or near, the date of my story. And here my method has kept me clear of the errors of James Annesley's attorney, who says, in "The Memoirs," that two of James's companions were executed in the *State of Delaware* for elopement and suspicion of adultery. Now the law in that State inflicted no such punishment. It imprisoned, whipped, and lettered. It did not kill. These colonies were hard upon religious offences, but, on the whole, they did not take life half so recklessly as the mother country did at that time, and, with regard to sexual criminality, they exacted such difficult *proofs*, that their laws on that head were much thunder and little lightning.

The Anglicana generalia have been culled with care from periodicals and books of fact too numerous to specify. The masculine costume the women wore in the morning rests on Addison, *Mist's Journal*, the *London Journal*, *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1730, *Daily Courant*, and other contemporaneous authorities which are full of detail. The entire reversal of female costume in the evening rests also on contemporary books, periodicals and pictures.

Lord Anglesey's levée and toilet are put together from *Mist's Journal* and various passages in the "Pictorial History of England."

In my novel of "A Simpleton" there is a dressmaker's bill,

In "The Wandering Heir" there is a dressmaker's bill.

I got the modern dressmaker's bill by asking three or four ladies of my acquaintance to oblige me with the original accounts. They did so.

I was about to pursue the same plan in "The Wandering Heir," when I found, to my disgust, I could not raise the dead. So I had to ransack libraries, — "The graves of those who cannot die." —*Crabbe*. I found the truth I wanted in "The Book of Costume, or Annals of Fashion," by a Lady of Rank.

The parson of Colebrook charges the best-bred ladies of his day with gross ignorance. I found that in numerous authorities, Lady Mary Wortley Montague's letters, Mrs. Stone's "Chronicles of Fashion," and, alas! in my own family letters before and after that date. As for their bad spelling, that continued long after the date of the parson's observations; other ladies spelled phonetically, besides Miss Tabitha Bramble. That ladies of fashion, at the date of my story, had vermin in their heads, I knew by oral tradition from two provincial hairdressers living in different parts of England: they were both old men when I was nine, and their grandfathers had been hairdressers. From these artists I learned that every hairdresser of that ancient period, and, indeed, much later, kept white precipitate by him in large quantities, and dusted the lady's colony freely before he dressed her hair.

That in England and Ireland the men drank hardest, but the women gambled most, I gained from essays and plays of the time.

How Dublin gentlemen lived, I got from "Barrington's Memoirs," "Ireland Sixty Years Ago," etc.; and how a Dublin lady passed her time, I got from Swift's photographic verses, which carry truth as plainly written on them as Livy and Tacitus carry falsehood.

If I could have raised three ladies of Dublin from the dead, I would not have troubled Swift. But I can't raise the dead any more than Mr. Home can; and I have no personal experience of the year 1730, so I took the only remaining source of truth, and interwove printed, but reliable, fact, with my figment.

Now let us conduct that comparison loyally which "Cœcilius" and "C. F." have dealt with more ingeniously than becomes a man's rivals in trade when they are indicting a scholar, and a man of fair reputation in his business.

Dean Swift begins with a few preliminary lines, which warn the reader that he is not going into fiction, but fact.

> "I but transcribe; for not a line
> Of all the satire shall be mine."

He then describes, not a strict sequence of events, but the actual habits of the ladies.

I, on the contrary, am telling a story. "The Wandering Heir" reaches his father's house. Then, to show the sort of men and women whose door he had come to, I describe, in strict sequence, what the males and the females had been actually doing during the twenty hours that preceded his arrival. In this narrative what *facts* are borrowed from Swift are italicised, and so are the corresponding passages in Swift.

"Oh, madam, an' if it please you, where does my father live?"

"'Tis in Frapper Lane, the corner house. What, will you be going, and no supper? Nay, then, God speed you. Give me a kiss, sweetheart. So. Your breath is honey. Sir," said she, courtesying to him, all of a sudden, "I do wish you well. When you come into your estate, sir, prithee remember Martha Knatchbull, that took your part when fortune frowned."

"Ay, that I will, good, kind lady," said James, still overpowered by her glorious costume; and so he shuffled off, limping fast, and, in the hunger of his longing heart, forgot his hungry belly for a time.

*

To give the reader some idea of the house he was going to, I will sketch the domestic performances from nine A.M., on the previous evening. Lord Altham and friends had a drinking bout, at the end of which he was assisted to bed, and his friends sent home in chairs. But the ladies did not drink; they gamed their lives away. Mistress Anne Gregory received Lady Dace and Mistress Carmichael, and other ladies gloriously dressed, and, at first starting, most polite and ceremonious; they drank tea, and soon warmed into scandal — *each accusing some other lady of her own especial vice* — till at last they got upon politics. Inflamed by this topic, they soon boiled over: *voices rose over voices; not a single tongue was mute a moment; and such was the Babel*, that at last the fat lazy *lap-dog* wriggled himself erect, and *barked furiously* at the disturbers of his peace. Then a Neptune arose to still the raging voices: in other words, Mrs. Betty set out the card-tables. Down they sat, and soon their eyes were gleaming, and their flesh trembling with excitement. Mistress Anne Gregory held bad cards; *she had to pawn ring after ring* —

By nature turn'd to play the rake well,
As we shall show you in the sequel,
The Dublin Dame is wak'd by Noon,
Some authors say not quite so soon;
Because, though sore against her will,
She sate all night up at Quadrille.
She stretches, gapes, unglues her eyes,
And asks if it be time to rise;
Of Headache and the spleen complains,
And then to cool her heated Brains —
Her night-gown and her slippers brought her, —
Takes a large dram of citron-water:
Then to her glass; and "Betty, pray
Don't I look frightfully to-day?
But, was it not confounded hard?
Well, if I ever touch a card,
Four Mattadores and lose Codill;
Depend upon't I never will.
But, run to Tom and bid him fix
The ladies here to-night by six."
"*Madam, the goldsmith waits below,*
He says his business is to know
If you'll redeem the silver cup
You pawned him first;" "Well, show him up."
"Your dressing-plate he'll be content
To take for interest cent. per cent.
And, Madam, there's my Lady Spade
Hath sent this letter by her maid."
"Well; I remember what she won;
And hath she sent so soon to dun?
Here, carry down these ten pistoles
My husband left to pay for coals.
I thank my stars they all are light!
And I may have revenge to-night."
Now loytring o'er her tea and cream
She enters on her usual theme;
Her last night's ill-success repeats;
Calls Lady Spade a hundred cheats;
She slipt Spadillo in her breast
Then thought to turn it to a jest,
There's Mrs. Cut and she combine
And to each other give the sign.
Through ev'ry game pursues her tale
Like hunters o'er their evening ale.
Now to another scene give place:
Enter the folks with silks and lace;
Fresh matter for a world of chat,
"Right Indian this; right Mecklin that;
Observe this pattern; there's a stuff;
I can have customers enough.

for these ladies, being well acquainted with each other, never played on parole—and she kept bemoaning her bad luck. "Betty, I knew how 'twould be. *The parson called to-day. This odious chair, why will you stick me in it? Stand further, girl. I always lose when you look on.*" Mrs. Betty tossed her head, and went behind another lady. Miss Gregory still lost, and *had to pawn her snuff-box* to Lady Dace. She consoled herself by an insinuation. "*My lady, you touched your wedding-ring. That was a sign to your partner here.*"

"Nay, madam, 'twas but a sign my finger itched. *But, if you go to that, you spoke a word began with H.* Then she *knew you had the king of hearts.*"

"That is like miss here," said another matron: "*she rubs her chair when she hath matador in hand.*"

"Set a thief to catch a thief, madam," was miss's ingenious and polished reply.

"Hey-dey!" cries one. "*Here's Spadillo got a mark on the back: a child might know it in the dark.* Mistress Pigot, *I wish you'd be pleased to pare your nails.*"

In short, they said things to each other all night, the slightest of which, among men, would have filled the Phœnix Park next morning with drawn swords: but it went for little here: they *were all cheats, and knew it, and knew the others knew it;* and didn't care. It was four o'clock before they broke up, *huddled on their cloaks and hoods, and their chairs took* them home with cold feet and aching heads.

At twelve next day Miss Gregory was prematurely disturbed by her lap-dog, barking like a demon for his breakfast. *She stretched, gaped, unglued her eyes, and rang for Betty.* No answer. She rang again, and beat the wall viciously with her slipper. Betty came in yawning.

Dear Madam, you have grown so hard,
This lace is worth twelve pounds a yard.
Madam, if there be Truth in Man,
I never sold so cheap a fan."
This business of importance o'er,
And Madam almost drest by four,
The footman, in his usual phrase,
Comes up with "Madam, dinner stays."
She answers in her usual style,
"The cook must keep it back a while;
I never can have time to dress,
No woman breathing takes up less;
I'm hurried so, it makes me sick,
I wish the dinner at *Old Nick.*"
At table now she acts her part,
Has all the dinner cant by heart.
"I thought we were to dine alone,
My dear, for sure, if I had known
This company would come to-day,
But really 'tis my spouse's way,
He's so unkind he never sends
To tell when he invites his friends;
I wish we may but have enough;"
And while with all this paltry stuff
She sits tormenting every guest,
Nor gives her tongue one moment's rest
In phrases batter'd, stale, and trite,
Which Dublin ladies call polite,
You see the Booby Husband sit
In admiration at her wit.
But let me now a while survey
Our Madam o'er her evening tea,
Surrounded with her noisy clans
Of Prudes, Coquettes, and Harridans;
When frighted at the clamorous crew,
Away the god of silence flew,
And Fair Discretion left the place,
And Modesty with blushing face.
Now enters overweening Pride,
And Scandal ever gaping wide,
Hypocrisy with frown severe,
Scurrility with gibing air,
Rude Laughter seeming like to burst,
And Malice always judging worst,
And Vanity with pocket-glass,
And Impudence with front of brass;
And studied Affectation came,
Each limb and feature out of frame:
While Ignorance with brain of lead
Flew hov'ring o'er each female head.

"Here, child. Let in some light. Nay, not so much: wouldst blind me? I'm dead of the vapors. *Give me a dram of citron-water.* So. Now bring me a looking-glass. I will lie abed. *Alack! I look frightfully to-day. If ever I touch a card again. Didst ever see such luck as mine? Four matadores, and lose codille!*"

"Nay, madam," said Mrs. Betty, who was infected with the tastes of her betters, "with submission, you played bad cards."

"Hoity toity, wench," cried the lady, "was ever such assurance? What is the world coming to?" And she packed her off contemptuously, to get her tea and cream.

Betty turned pale with wrath, but retired. Once outside the door, she said, "I'll be even with the jade. I'm as good as she."

Miss Gregory was at her glass when Betty returned with the tea. "*Madam,*" *said she with a sly sneer,* "*the goldsmith waits below, to know if you will redeem the silver cup.*"

"There, give him that for interest."

"*And my Lady Dace has sent her maid.*"

"*That is for her winnings. Never was such a dun. Here, take these ten pistoles my lord left for the wine merchant. They are all light, thank Heaven!*"

At two, being half dressed, and the room tidied, but not a window opened, she received the visit of a fop. He paid her hyperbolical compliments, at which you should have seen Mrs. Betty's lip curl, and was consulted as to where she should put her patches;

Why should I ask of these my Muse
A hundred tongues, as Poets use,
When, to give ev'ry Dame her due,
A hundred thousand were too few,
Or how should I, alas! relate
The sum of all their senseless prate,
Their innuendoes, hints, and slanders,
Their meanings lewd, and double entendres?
Now comes the general Scandal charge,
What some invent, the rest enlarge,
"And, Madam, if it be a lie,
You have the tale as cheap as I.
I must conceal my Author's Name,
But now 'tis known by common Fame."
Say, foolish females, cold, and blind,
Say by what fatal turn of mind
Are you on Vices most severe
Wherein yourselves have greatest share.
Thus every fool herself deludes;
The Prude condemns the absent Prudes;
Mopsa, who stinks her spouse to death,
Hercina, rank with sweat, presumes
To censure Phillis for perfumes;
While crooked Cynthia swearing says
That Florimel wears iron stays:
Chloris, of ev'ry Coxcomb jealous,
Admires how girls can talk with Fellows,
And full of indignation frets
That Women should be such Coquettes:
Iris, for Scandal most notorious,
Cries, "Lord, the World is so censorious;"
And Rufa, with her combs of lead,
Whispers that Sappho's hair is red;
Aura, whose Tongue you hear a mile hence,
Talks half a day in praise of silence;
And Silvia, full of inward guilt,
Calls Amoret an arrant jilt.
Now voices over voices rise;
While each to be the loudest vies,
They contradict, affirm, dispute,
No single tongue one moment mute,
All mad to speak, and none to hearken,
They set the very lap-dog barking.
Their chattering makes a louder din
Than Fish-wives o'er a cup of gin:
Not schoolboys at a barring-out
Rais'd ever such incessant shout:
The Jumbling particles of Matter
In Chaos make not such a clatter;
Far less the Rabble roar and rail
When drunk with sour election ale.

but was driven out, like chaff before the wind, by a creature more attractive, to wit, *a mercer, with silks, patterns, and laces, from Paris; so the toilet was not complete at four, when a footman knocked at the door with "Madam, dinner stays."*

"Then the cook must keep it back. I never can have time to dress; and I am sure no living woman takes less."

However, she soon came down, distended with an enormous hoop, glorious with brocaded skirt and quilted petticoat, and cocked up on red high-heeled shoes; bedizened, belaced, powdered, pomatumed, pulvilioed, patched, perfumed and everything else — except washed; yet less savage than the men in one respect: the commode and all the pyramidal scaffolded heads had gone out; her hair was her own, and, though long, was compressed into a small compass, whereas the gentlemen had full-bottomed wigs that smothered their heads, contracted their cheeks, flowed over their shoulders, and befloured their backs.

My Lord Altham and two to three other gentlemen were there and three ladies. Lord Altham, a little dark man with a loud voice, received her with great respect, and told her they waited only for his brother, Captain Richard Annesley.

"Nay, he will not come, methinks," said she. "He and I had words t'other day."

"Nay, then, let the churl hang. Who waits?"

A flaring footman appeared as if his string had been pulled.

"Bid them serve the dinner."

"I will, my lord."

For the conversation during dinner, see Swift's

Nor do they trust their tongues alone —
They speak a language of their own;
Can read a nod, a shrug, a look,
Far better than a printed book;
Convey a Libel in a Frown;
And Wink a Reputation down;
Or by a tossing of a fan,
Describe the lady and the man.
But see, the female club disbands,
Each, twenty visits on her hands.
Now all alone poor Madam sits
In vapors and hysteric fits.
"And was not Tom this morning sent?
I'd lay my life he never went.
Past six, and not a living soul;
I might by this have won a vole."
A dreadful interval of spleen!
How shall she pass the time between!
"Here, Betty, let me take my drops,
And feel my pulse, I know it stops;
This head of mine, Lord, how it swims!
And such a pain in all my limbs."
"Dear Madam, try to take a nap."
But now they hear a footman's rap.
"Go, run and light the ladies up;
It must be one before we sup."
The table, cards, and counters set,
And all the gamester ladies met,
Her spleen and fits recover'd quite,
Our madam can sit up all night.
"Whoever comes, I'm not within,
Quadrille the word, and so begin."
How can the Muse her aid impart,
Unskilled in all the terms of art?
Or in harmonious numbers put
The deal, the shuffle, and the cut?
The superstitious whims relate
That fill a female gamester's pate;
What agony of soul she feels
To see a knave's inverted heels;
She draws up card by card, to find
Good fortune peeping from behind,
With panting heart and earnest eyes
In hope to see Spadillo rise.
In vain, alas! her hope is fled;
She draws an ace, and sees it red.
In ready counters never pays,
But pawns her snuff-box, rings, and keys.
Ever with some new fancy struck,
Tries twenty charms to mend her luck.
"*This morning, when the parson came,*
I said I should not win a game,

"Polite Conversation." You will be a gainer by the exchange; for the discourse at Lord Altham's board was half as coarse, and not half so witty.

Soon after dinner the host proposed "Church and State."

From that moment the ladies were evidently on their guard and ready for flight.

"Parson," says my lord, "I'll tell you a merry story."

The ladies rose like one, and retired. My lord having achieved his end, for at this time of night the bottle was his mistress, until it became his master, substituted a toast for his song:

> "The finest sight beneath the moon
> Is to see the ladies quit the room."

He then ordered the present bottles and glasses to be exchanged for others that would not stand upright, the stems of the glasses having been knocked off, and the decanters being made like a soda-water bottle. This insured so brisk a circulation that, although they were gentlemen who had all "made their heads" in early life, the claret began to tell, as was proved by the swift alternations of superfluous ire, and hyperbolical affection, and peals of idiotic laughter; when in the midst of the din, an altercation was heard in the hall: the disputants were three, and each voice had its own key; first there was a sweet little quavering soprano, appealing to a flaring footman, then there was a flaring footman, objurgating the cherubic voice an octave lower, then came the commanding alto of Mrs. Betty.

This odious chair, how came I stuck in't?
I think I never had good luck in't.
I'm so uneasy in my stays,
Your fan a moment, if you please.
Stand further, girl, or get you gone,
I always lose when you look on."
"Lord, Madam, you have lost codille;
I never saw you play so ill."
"Nay, Madam, give me leave to say
'Twas you that threw the game away;
When Lady Tricksey play'd a four
You took it with a matadore,
I saw you touch your wedding-ring
Before my lady call'd a king;
You spoke a word began with H,
And I knew who you mean to teach,
Because you held the king of hearts;
Fye, Madam, leave these little arts."
"*That's not so bad as one that rubs*
Her chair to call the king of clubs,
And makes her partner understand
A matadore is in her hand."
"Madam, you have no cause to flounce,
I swear I saw you thrice renounce."
"And truly, Madam, I know when
Instead of five you scor'd me ten."
"*Spadillo here has got a mark,*
A child may know it in the dark;
I guess the hand, it seldom fails,
I wish some folks would pare their nails."
While thus they rail, and scold and storm,
It passes but for common form,
All conscious that they all speak true
And give each other but their due;
It never interrupts the game,
Or makes them sensible of shame.
The time too precious now to waste,
The supper gobbled up in haste;
Again afresh to cards they run
As if they had but just begun.
At last they hear the Watchman's knock,
"*A frosty morn—past four o'clock.*"
The Chairmen are not to be found—
"Come, let us play the t'other round."
Now all in haste they huddle on
Their hoods and cloaks, and get them gone.
But first the winner must invite
The company to-morrow night.
Unlucky Madam, left in tears,
Who now again Quadrille forswears,
With empty purse and *aching head,*
Steals to her sleeping spouse to bed.

You have now the true proportions in which the two heterogeneous works resemble each other. But there is another thing to be considered; the form and construction of the two compositions.

The order of the topics in Swift's verses is, —

1. Time twelve to four P.M. The lady's morning scene, and her ill success at cards over-night not presented, but referred to by herself.

2. Dinner-time. The lady's affectation and ill manners.

3. Evening tea. Scandal.

4. Separation of the ladies, ennui.

5. Another meeting for cards. Gaming till four A.M.

My order and construction is, —

1. Time, nine in the evening till four A.M. Gentlemen drinking apart from the ladies, till carried home, or to bed. Ladies — Tea — Scandal — Cards — Bed — in an unbroken sequence.

2. Twelve o'clock till seven. Bedroom scene. — Mercer — Dinner — The gentlemen's way of getting rid of the ladies — The gentlemen's habits — Precautions to secure intoxication — all in one unbroken series.

Thus I treat the gentlemen's lives, and the ladies, in far less compass than Swift gives to the ladies. This duplication of topics, and entire change of form, and improved sequence of facts are not the method of the servile plagiarist, but of the inventive scholar who has the skill to select, and interweave another writer's valuable facts into his own figment.

"C. F." says in her second letter that the great writers whose method I profess to follow, always improved what they took; but I have merely turned good poetry into very commonplace prose. This is a double error.

1. Great writers have not always improved the ideas they borrowed. To take two examples out of a hundred, Virgil watered Lucretius vilely with his "Duo fulmina belli Scipiades;" and Shakspeare, in "All's Well that Ends Well," has in places vulgarized Boccaccio.

2. Swift's lines are not good poetry. They are not poetry at all; they are slipshod doggerel. It is the matter that redeems them; the form is worse than prose. Often the thought

is complete in one line, yet a superfluous line is added to effect the rhyme. Now follow the particles of Swift into my prose, and see if you can cut out a line of that prose without diminishing the sense in proportion. The few golden particles of Swift I have taken are therefore not disfigured by being set in the closest prose of the day, and in the improved sequence of a narrative.

To sum up: Fiction is the art of weaving fact with invention. If it were mere arrangement of fact, thousands could write it; if it were pure invention, the young would beat the elderly at it. Instead of that, the young, with all the advantage of their ardent imaginations and generous blood and elastic energy, write flimsy stuff for want of Fact. If Dickens appears an exception, that is only because Dickens ripened early, and was initiated into that sort of fact which is good material for fiction ten years sooner than other writers.

Of fact there are three sources, — experience, hearsay, printed records.

An individual's personal experience is so narrow, that it can carry him but a little way in fiction. We none of us know much except from print. In writing an historical tale, experience and hearsay dwindle, and the printed facts we have gathered, many of them unconsciously, become the main material.

To interweave these in fiction is the same intellectual operation as to interweave the facts we have seen and heard. Whoever denies this is a fool; whoever admits it, yet cannot realize it, and apply it to the question of plagiarism, is weak of mental digestion, and, though he may criticise all his life, will never be a critic. To borrow scenes and dialogues from a novel of Swift, and put them in a novel, would be plagiarism. But to transplant a few facts out of many in a heap collected by Swift, and then, by change of form and sequence, wield them with another topic into a heterogeneous work, this is not plagiarism: it is one of every true inventor's processes, and only an inventor can do it well. It is precisely the same intellectual crime I was guilty of, when I took the fact of the turf backgammon board, and the dice boy, from the lips of a friend, and wove it into my tale; or when in "A Simpleton" I interwove the numerous facts I had gathered at first-hand in auction-rooms.

Spawn and millet — millet and spawn — without the pair, nature cannot produce a single herring, nor art a single fiction worth its weight in sawdust.

And when fiction adds to its difficulties, when it aspires to deal with the past, to raise the dead from their graves, and make them live, and move, and dress, and act, and speak, and feel again, in a strong domestic story, then must ripe learning and keen invention meet, or gross failure ensue. Then must the spawn be more copious than ever, and the millet more strong and vivifying. To this occasion the words of Horace apply particularly, —

> "Nec studium sine divite venâ
> Nec rude quid possit video ingenium; alterius sic
> Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice."

An artist is seldom a critic, and you may think it presumptuous of me to lay down the law. Permit me to explain. I studied the great art of fiction closely for fifteen years before I presumed to write a line of it. I was a ripe critic long before I became an artist. My critical knowledge has directed my art, but the practice of that art has not diminished my studies.

Forty years examination of masterpieces, and their true history, have qualified me to speak with some little authority.

Nevertheless, the lawyers say, —

> "Aliquis non debet esse judex in propriâ causâ."

That is such very bad Latin, I am sure it must be good law; so this discussion shall be closed for the present by the judgment of public writers, who are, I apprehend, above all suspicion of prejudice in the matter.

Extract from a letter by a Queen's Collegian, Cork, to the Editor of *Once a Week*: —

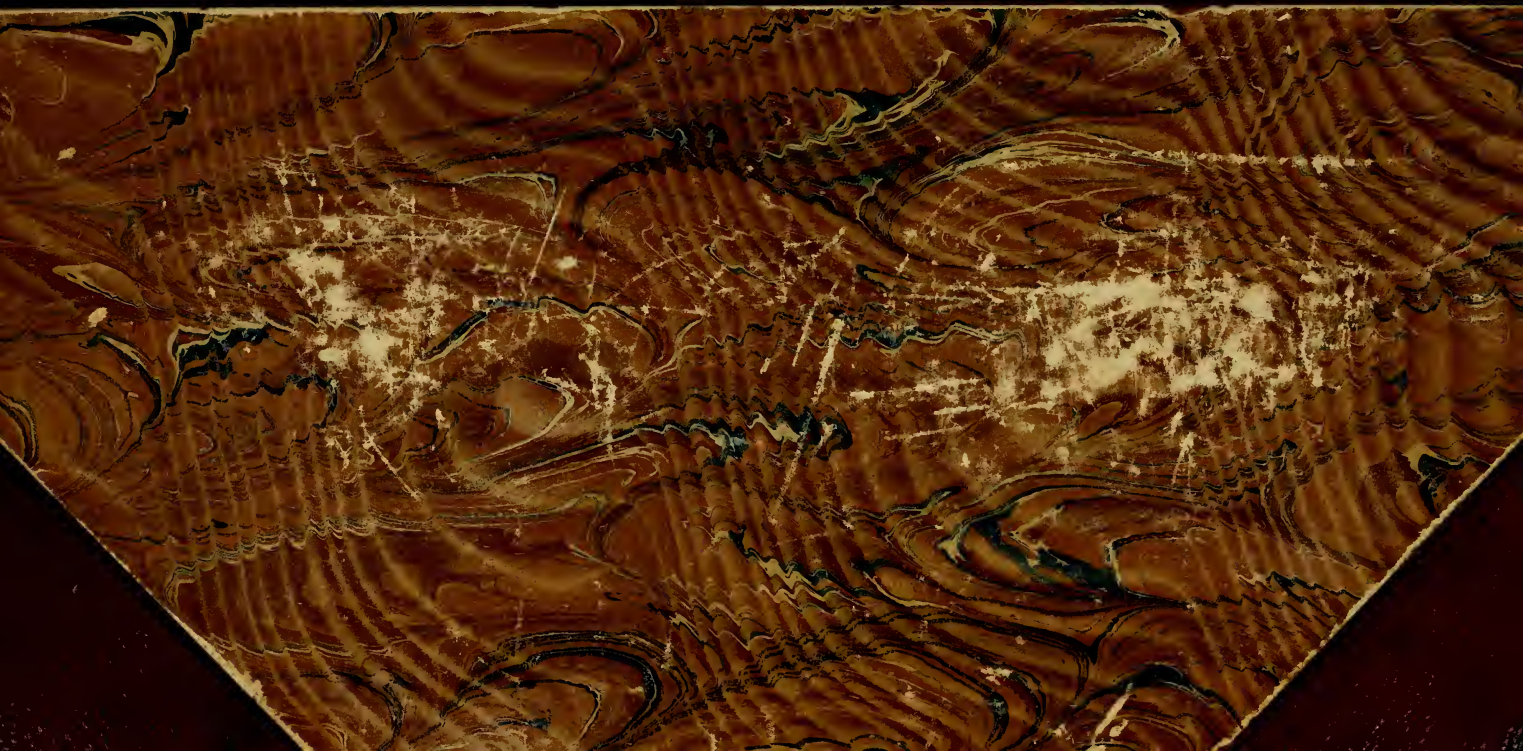
Having read Mr. Charles Reade's able vindication of his literary fame, I hope you will kindly permit me to offer a remark on the subject. The manners and drawing-room life of the Irish aristocracy in the early part of the last century cannot be reliably ascertained from the "History of Ireland," or from political pamphlets.

The only writer of eminence who ventured to describe, with anything like minuteness, the style of living among the upper classes in this country at that period is Swift; and his description, certainly, though not elaborate, is life-like and powerful. I do not hesitate to say that, had Mr. Reade neglected to make use of the passage in Swift's poem referred to, his portraiture of Irish upper-class society would be necessarily imperfect, as, in a tale like "The Wandering Heir," in which the manners of bygone times are reproduced, authentic accounts must be referred to. Otherwise, would not the attempt to paint the state of society at a period when it was totally different from that of the present day — in the absence of good authorities — be a mere fancy picture, without a tittle of connection with reality? How, in the name of goodness, could any writer reproduce the spirit of the past in his works without some description by an experienced critic of the period to guide him? It is the shallowest pedantry, in my opinion, on the part of the pseudonymuncule, to charge Mr. Reade with plagiarism for laudably seeking and using the information he obtained from a work so well known, and so valuable for its picture of contemporary high life, that it may well be called a book of reference. Nor is this proceeding of Mr. Reade's by any means without precedent. Sir Walter Scott freely acknowledges the benefit he derived from forgotten MSS. and ancient poems, as well as from more modern sources. Indeed, he is rather ostentatious in his prefaces as regards his authorities. He made use largely of various documents in writing "The Heart of Midlothian," the foundation of which, as is well known, is a famous Scotch trial. Then, again, in those historical novels depicting earlier periods, such as "Ivanhoe," "Kenilworth," etc., he has embodied a large amount of antiquarian description borrowed from various records. In "The Fair Maid of Perth," he has made use of Wintoun's old poem on the battle of the clans Quhale and Chattan; and he has ingeniously given part of the verses in the introduction. And surely we cannot call Scott a plagiarist for this? No more can we apply the term to Reade. I have no doubt the literary world, recognizing as it does the worth of one of the greatest — if not, indeed, the greatest — of living English novelists, will laugh to scorn the puny snarler who has attempted to injure a noble reputation. Charles Reade is admired in Ireland and America as much as he is in England. He has stamped himself indelibly on the age as a moral reformer by "It is Never too Late to Mend," a deep student of human nature by "Hard Cash" and "Put Yourself in His Place," and as an enchanting story-teller by his other novels.

MR. CHARLES READE AND HIS LAST CRITIC.

MR. CHARLES READE — as all the world knows, because all the world has read it — has just written for the *Graphic* one of the most charming stories possible, almost as charming as "Peg Woffington." Mr. Somebody Else, whom probably the world does not know, has just found a tremendous mare's-nest about it, and has been spreading his wings and cackling over it through two long columns of the *Athenæum*. This is his wonderful discovery: — Mr. Reade proposed to himself, in writing "The Wandering Heir," a different plan to that followed by most historical novelists. He actually tries to represent his characters not only dressed in the eighteenth century costume, but talking, thinking, and acting with eighteenth century ideas. It may be surprising to the *Athenæum* correspondent, but that is what Mr. Reade proposed to do. And in order to do it, he turned to account his reading of the literature of the period; and when he has to describe a party of fashionable ladies at cards, he takes Swift's "Journal of a Modern Lady," which every schoolboy knows, and pictures just such another said party as that of Swift's. Moreover, in the conversations of the ladies, Mr. Reade, as the mare's-nest critic discovers, has actually reproduced at least a dozen lines of the great Dean's own words. Here is a precious to-do! We look at each other in amazement. None of our immortal works are safe, then. Here is a man who is actually capable of putting into the mouths of his characters some of the best-known lines in the English language, without acknowledging them. Next he will be taking the Church Catechism, or some other equally familiar work, and making Celia, or Philip, or Jack try to pass it off as his own. Seriously, it seems to me that the editor of the *Athenæum* has made a great mistake in allowing this most ridiculous letter to appear in his highly respectable paper. If you are to throw your time back two hundred years, you have no other way possible but *to use the literature of the period.* Mr. Reade has gone to the best, and best-known writers of the time. He takes a poem with which every student in English literature, even the most superficial, is perfectly familiar — one about which the word plagiarism could not possibly be employed — and transmutes it, by the power of his genius, to serve the purposes of his prose. But the scene is Reade's, not Swift's; and it is the merest captiousness to object to the use of a few lines which everybody knows are Swift's, but which fit perfectly with the context. Of course, the question involved is a large one — no other than the right of using the literature of the past. To me it is evident that

in no other way can an historical novel, or a novel of bygone times, be written at all; unless — as in . . . — you are content to give your characters nineteenth century ideas and fifteenth century dresses. The *Athenæum* writer remarks at the close — it is exactly what one would expect him to remark — that "if this is how novels are made, surely novel-writing must be an easy art." Very easy indeed. You want nothing but a few years of hard and patient labor, and then — like a spoonful of salt in your soup — just a pinch of genius. But I have got a proposition to make to the finder of mare's-nests. If he has not read "The Cloister and the Hearth," I will sketch the plot — i. e., the life of Gerard — for him. I will give him the works of Erasmus and Rabelais, with the whole corpus of early French novelettes, the table-talk of Luther, the poems of Clement Marot, and any other books of the period he may wish to read. I will then furnish him with a bundle of quill pens, and a ream of paper, and invite him to write, from these materials — the same as those used by Charles Reade — a rival novel to "The Cloister and the Hearth." Or, if that would take too long, let him, with Pope, Swift, Addison, and Steele at his elbow, be good enough to give the world a novelette. He will find it "very easy," I have not the least doubt, to equal Mr. Charles Reade; and when it is done, I have also not the least doubt that the editor of the *Graphic* will give him, too, a chance of pleasing the quarter of a million people who have bought "The Wandering Heir." Other portions of the works of Swift might be read by the *Athenæum* critic to good purpose, particularly a few lines — he will easily find them — such as the following:—

"We all behold with envious eyes,
Our equals raised above our size.
Who would not at a crowded show
Stand high himself, keep others low?
What poet would not grieve to see
His brother write as well as he?
But rather than they should excel,
Would wish his rivals all in h—ll?
Her end when Emulation misses,
She turns to envy, stings, and hisses.
I have no title to aspire —
Yet, when you sink I seem the higher."

[The foregoing note was in type before we received Mr. Charles Reade's communication. After having received it, we see no reason to omit our own remarks from our present issue.]